WORLD FAMED STORIES AND LEGENDS

HAMILTON W. MABIE

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GLUCK STANDS ON THE BRINK OF THE GOLDEN RIVER

WORLD-FAMED STORIES AND LEGENDS

A SELECTION OF THE BEST STORIES AND LEGENDS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

IN TWO PARTS

EDITED BY

HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE

DECORATED BY BLANCHE OSTERTAG

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PART I—FAMOUS STORIES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TO

"FAMOUS STORIES EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW"

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INTRODUCTION

TO

"FAMOUS STORIES EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW"

THE group of stories brought together in this volume differ from legends because they have, with one exception, no core of fact at the centre, from myths because they make no attempt to personify or explain the forces or processes of nature, from fairy stories because they do not often bring on to the stage actors of a different nature from ours. They give full play to the fancy as in "A Child's Dream of a Star," "The King of the Golden River," Undine," and "The Snow Image"; but they are not poetic records of the facts of life, attempts to shape those facts "to meet the needs of the imagination, the cravings of the heart." In the Introduction to the book of Fairy Tales in this series, those familiar and much loved stories which have been repeated to children for unnumbered generations and will be repeated to the end of time, are described as "records of the free and joyful play of the imagination, opening doors through hard conditions to the spirit, which craves power, freedom, happiness; righting wrongs, and redressing injuries; defeating base designs; rewarding patience and virtue; crowning true love with happiness; placing the powers of darkness under the control of man and making their ministers his servants." The stories which make up this volume are closer to experience and come, for the most part, nearer to the every-day happenings of life.

A generation ago, when the noble activities of science and its inspiring discoveries were taking possession of the minds of men and revealing possibilities of power of which they had not dreamed, the prediction was freely made that

poetry and fiction had had their day, and that henceforth men would be educated upon facts and get their inspirations from what are called real things. So engrossing and so marvellous were the results of investigation, the achievements of experiment, that it seemed to many as if the older literature of imagination and fancy had served its purpose as completely as alchemy, astrology, or chain armour.

The prophecies of those fruitful years of research did not tell half the story of the wonderful things that were to be; the uses of electricity which are within easy reach for the most homely and practical purposes are as mysterious and magical as the dreams of the magicians. We are served by invisible ministers who are more powerful than the genii and more nimble than Puck. There has been a girdle around the world for many years; but there is good reason to believe that the time will come when news will go round the globe on waves of air. If we were not accustomed to ordering breakfast miles away from the grocer and the poulterer, we should be overcome with amazement every time we took up the telephone transmitter. Absolutely pure tones are now being made by the use of dynamos and will soon be sent into homes lying miles distant from the power house, so to speak, so that very sweet music is being played by arc lights.

The anticipations of scientific men, so far as the uses of force are concerned, have been surpassed by the wonderful discoveries and applications of the past few years; but poetry and romance are not dead; on the contrary, they are more alive in the sense of awakening a wider interest than ever before in the history of writing. During the years which have been more fruitful in works of mechanical genius or dynamic energy, novels have been more widely distributed and more eagerly read than at any previous

period. The poetry of the time, in the degree in which it has been fresh and vital, has been treated by newspapers as matter of universal interest.

Men are born story-readers; if their interest subsides for the moment, or is absorbed by other forms of expression, it reasserts itself in due time and demands the old enchantment that has woven its spell over every generation since men and women reached an early stage of development. Barbarians and even savages share with the most highly civilised peoples this passion for fiction.

Men cannot live on the bare, literal fact any more than they can live on bread alone; there is something in every man to feed besides his body. He has been told many times by men of great disinterestedness and ability that he must believe only that which he clearly knows and understands, and that he must concern himself with those matters only which he can thoroughly comprehend. He must live, in other words, by the rule of common sense; meaning by that oft-used phrase, clear sight and practical dealing with actual things and conditions. It would greatly simplify life if this course could be followed, but it would simplify it by rejecting those things which the finest spirits among men and women have loved most and believed in with joyful and fruitful devotion. If we could all become literal, matter of fact and entirely practical, we should take the best possible care of our bodies and let our souls starve. This, however, the soul absolutely refuses to do; when it is ignored it rebels and shivers the apparently solid order of common-sense living into fragments. It must have air to breathe, room to move in, a language to speak, work to do, and an open window through which it can look on the landscape and the sky. It is as idle to tell a man to live entirely in and by facts that can be known by the senses as to tell

him to work in a field and not see the landscape of which the field is a part.

The love of the story is one of the expressions of the passion of the soul for a glimpse of an order of life amid the chaos of happenings; for a setting of life which symbolises the dignity of the actors in the play; for room in which to let men work out their instincts and risk their hearts in the great adventures of affection or action or exploration. Men and women find in stories the opportunities and experiences which circumstances have denied them; they insist on the dramatisation of life because they know that certain results inevitably follow certain actions, and certain deeply interesting conflicts and tragedies are bound up with certain temperaments and types of character.

The fact that many stories are unwholesome, untrue, vulgar or immoral impeaches the value and dignity of fiction as little as the abuse of power impeaches the necessity and nobility of government, or the excess of the glutton the healthfulness and necessity of food. The imagination must not only be counted as an entirely normal faculty, but the higher intelligence of the future will recognise its primacy among the faculties with which men are endowed. Fiction is not only here to stay, as the phrase runs, but it is one of the great and enduring forms of literature.

The question is not, therefore, whether or not children shall read stories; that question was answered when they were sent into the world in the human form and with the human constitution: the only open question is "what stories shall they read?" That many children read too many stories is beyond question: their excessive devotion to fiction wastes time and seriously impairs vigour of mind. In these respects they follow the current which carries a multitude of their elders to mental inefficiency and waste

of power. That they read too many weak, untruthful, characterless stories is also beyond question; and in this respect also they are like their elders. They need food, but in no intelligent household do they select and provide it; they are given what they like if it is wholesome; if not, they are given something different and better. No sane mother allows her child to live on the food it likes if that food is unwholesome; but this is precisely what many mothers and fathers do in the matter of feeding the imagination. The body is scrupulously cared for and the mind is left to care for itself!

Children ought to have stories at hand precisely as they ought to have food, toys, games, playgrounds, because stories meet one of the normal needs of their natures. But these stories, like the food given to the body, ought to be intelligently selected, not only for their quality but for their adaptation. There are many good books which ought not to be in the hands of children because children have not had the experience which interprets them; they will either fail to understand, or if they understand, they will suffer a sudden forcing of growth in the knowledge of life which is always unwholesome.

Only stories which are sound in the views of life they present ought to be within the reach of children; these stories ought to be well constructed and well written; they ought to be largely objective stories; they ought not to be introspective, morbid or abnormal in any way. Goody-good and professionally "pious" stories, sentimental or unreal stories, ought to be rigorously excluded. A great deal of fiction specially written for children ought to be left severely alone; it is cheap, shallow and stamped with unreality from cover to cover. It is as unwise to feed the minds of children exclusively on books specially prepared

for their particular age as to shape the talk at breakfast or dinner specially for their stage of development; few opportunities for education are more valuable for a child than hearing the talk of its elders about the topics of the time. There are many wholesome and entertaining stories in the vast mass of fiction addressed to younger readers; but this literature of a period ought never to exclude the literature of all periods.

The stories collected in this volume have been selected from many sources, because in the judgment of the editor, they are sound pieces of writing, wholesome in tone, varied in interest and style, and interesting. It is his hope that they will not only furnish good reading, but that they will suggest the kind of reading in this field that should be within the reach of children.

HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE.

Famous Stories Every Child Should Know

STORIES EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW

I

A CHILD'S DREAM OF A STAR

THERE was once a child, and he strolled about a good deal, and thought of a number of things. He had a sister, who was a child too, and his constant companion. These two used to wonder all day long. They wondered at the beauty of the flowers; they wondered at the height and blueness of the sky; they wondered at the depth of the bright water; they wondered at the goodness and the power of God who made the lovely world.

They used to say to one another, sometimes, supposing all the children upon earth were to die, would the flowers, and the water, and the sky be sorry? They believed they would be sorry. For, said they, the buds are the children of the flowers, and the little playful streams that gambol down the hill-sides are the children of the water; and the smallest bright specks playing at hide and seek in the sky all night, must surely be the children of the stars; and they would all be grieved to see their playmates, the children of men, no more.

There was one clear shining star that used to come out in the sky before the rest, near the church spire, above the graves. It was larger and more beautiful, they thought, than all the others, and every night they watched for it,

standing hand in hand at a window. Whoever saw it first cried out, "I see the star!" And often they cried out both together, knowing so well when it would rise, and where. So they grew to be such friends with it, that, before lying down in their beds, they always looked out once again, to bid it good-night; and when they were turning round to sleep, they used to say, "God bless the star!"

But while she was still very young, oh very, very young, the sister drooped, and came to be so weak that she could no longer stand in the window at night; and then the child looked sadly out by himself, and when he saw the star, turned round and said to the patient pale face on the bed, "I see the star!" and then a smile would come upon the face, and a little weak voice used to say, "God bless my brother and the star!"

And so the time came all too soon! when the child looked out alone, and when there was no face on the bed; and when there was a little grave among the graves, not there before; and when the star made long rays down toward him, as he saw it through his tears.

Now, these rays were so bright, and they seemed to make such a shining way from earth to Heaven, that when the child went to his solitary bed, he dreamed about the star; and dreamed that, lying where he was, he saw a train of people taken up that sparkling road by angels. And the star, opening, showed him a great world of light, where many more such angels waited to receive them.

All these angels, who were waiting, turned their beaming eyes upon the people who were carried up into the star; and some came out from the long rows in which they stood, and fell upon the people's necks, and kissed them tenderly, and went away with them down avenues of light, and were so happy in their company, that lying in his bed he wept for joy.

But, there were many angels who did not go with them, and among them one he knew. The patient face that once had lain upon the bed was glorified and radiant, but his heart found out his sister among all the host.

His sister's angel lingered near the entrance of the star, and said to the leader among those who had brought the people thither:

"Is my brother come?"

And he said "No."

She was turning hopefully away, when the child stretched out his arms, and cried, "O, sister, I am here! Take me!" and then she turned her beaming eyes upon him, and it was night; and the star was shining into the room, making long rays down towards him as he saw it through his tears.

From that hour forth, the child looked out upon the star as on the home he was to go to, when his time should come; and he thought that he did not belong to the earth alone, but to the star too, because of his sister's angel gone before.

There was a baby born to be a brother to the child; and while he was so little that he never yet had spoken word he stretched his tiny form out on his bed, and died.

Again the child dreamed of the open star, and of the company of angels, and the train of people, and the rows of angels with their beaming eyes all turned upon those people's faces.

Said his sister's angel to the leader:

"Is my brother come?"

And he said "Not that one, but another."

As the child beheld his brother's angel in her arms, he cried, "O, sister, I am here! Take me!" And she turned and smiled upon him, and the star was shining.

He grew to be a young man, and was busy at his books when an old servant came to him and said:

"Thy mother is no more. I bring her blessing on her darling son!"

Again at night he saw the star, and all that former company. Said his sister's angel to the leader:

"Is my brother come?"

And he said, "Thy mother!"

A mighty cry of joy went forth through all the star, because the mother was reunited to her two children. And he stretched out his arms and cried, "O, mother, sister, and brother, I am here! Take me!" And they answered him, "Not yet," and the star was shining.

He grew to be a man, whose hair was turning gray, and he was sitting in his chair by the fireside, heavy with grief, and with his face bedewed with tears, when the star opened once again.

Said his sister's angel to the leader: "Is my brother come?'

And he said, "Nay, but his maiden daughter."

And the man who had been the child saw his daughter, newly lost to him, a celestial creature among those three, and he said, "My daughter's head is on my sister's bosom, and her arm is around my mother's neck, and at her feet there is the baby of old time, and I can bear the parting from her, God be praised!"

And the star was shining.

Thus the child came to be an old man, and his once smooth face was wrinkled, and his steps were slow and feeble, and his back was bent. And one night as he lay upon his bed, his children standing round, he cried, as he had cried so long ago:

"I see the star!"

They whispered one to another, "He is dying."

And he said, "I am. My age is falling from me like a garment, and I move towards the star as a

child. And O, my Father, now I thank Thee that it has so often opened, to receive those dear ones who await me!"

And the star was shining; and it shines upon his grave.

II

THE KING OF THE GOLDEN RIVER; OR, THE BLACK BROTHERS

I.—HOW THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM OF THE BLACK BROTHERS WAS INTERFERED WITH BY SOUTHWEST WIND, ESQUIRE

IN a secluded and mountainous part of Stiria there was, in old time, a valley of the most surprising and luxuriant fertility. It was surrounded, on all sides, by steep and rocky mountains, rising into peaks, which were always covered with snow, and from which a number of torrents descended in constant cataracts. One of these fell westward, over the face of a crag so high, that, when the sun had set to everything else, and all below was darkness, his beams still shone full upon this waterfall, so that it looked like a shower of gold. It was, therefore, called by the people of the neighbourhood, the Golden River. It was strange that none of these streams fell into the valley itself. They all descended on the other side of the mountains, and wound away through broad plains and by populous cities. But the clouds were drawn so constantly to the snowy hills, and rested so softly in the circular hollow, that in time of drought and heat, when all the country round was burnt up, there was still rain in the little valley; and its crops were so heavy, and its hay so high, and its apples so red, and its grapes so blue, and its wine so rich, and its honey so sweet,

that it was a marvel to everyone who beheld it, and was commonly called the Treasure Valley.

The whole of this little valley belonged to three brothers called Schwartz, Hans, and Gluck. Schwartz and Hans, the two elder brothers, were very ugly men, with overhanging eyebrows and small, dull eyes, which were always half shut, so that you couldn't see into *them*, and always fancied they saw very far into *you*. They lived by farming the Treasure Valley, and very good farmers they were. They killed everything that did not pay for its eating. They shot the blackbirds, because they pecked the fruit; and killed the hedgehogs, lest they should suck the cows; they poisoned the crickets for eating the crumbs in the kitchen; and smothered the cicadas, which used to sing all summer in the lime-trees. They worked their servants without any wages, till they would not work any more, and then quarrelled with them, and turned them out of doors without paying them. It would have been very odd, if with such a farm, and such a system of farming, they hadn't got very rich; and very rich they *did* get. They generally contrived to keep their corn by them till it was very dear, and then sell it for twice its value; they had heaps of gold lying about on their floors, yet it was never known that they had given so much as a penny or a crust in charity; they never went to mass; grumbled perpetually at paying tithes; and were, in a word, of so cruel and grinding a temper, as to receive from all those with whom they had any dealings the nickname of the "Black Brothers."

The youngest brother, Gluck, was as completely opposed, in both appearance and character, to his seniors as could possibly be imagined or desired. He was not above twelve years old, fair, blue-eyed, and kind in temper to every living thing. He did not, of course, agree particularly well with

his brothers, or, rather, they did not agree with *him*. He was usually appointed to the honourable office of turnspit, when there was anything to roast, which was not often; for, to do the brothers justice, they were hardly less sparing upon themselves than upon other people. At other times he used to clean the shoes, floors, and sometimes the plates, occasionally getting what was left on them, by way of encouragement, and a wholesome quantity of dry blows, by way of education.

Things went on in this manner for a long time. At last came a very wet summer, and everything went wrong in the country around. The hay had hardly been got in, when the hay-stacks were floated bodily down to the sea by an inundation; the vines were cut to pieces with the hail; the corn was all killed by a black blight; only in the Treasure Valley, as usual, all was safe. As it had rain when there was rain nowhere else, so it had sun when there was sun nowhere else. Everybody came to buy corn at the farm, and went away pouring maledictions on the Black Brothers. They asked what they liked, and got it, except from the poor, who could only beg, and several of whom were starved at their very door, without the slightest regard or notice.

It was drawing towards winter, and very cold weather, when one day the two elder brothers had gone out, with their usual warning to little Gluck, who was left to mind the roast, that he was to let nobody in, and give nothing out. Gluck sat down quite close to the fire, for it was raining very hard, and the kitchen walls were by no means dry or comfortable-looking. He turned and turned, and the roast got nice and brown. "What a pity," thought Gluck, "my brothers never ask anybody to dinner. I'm sure, when they've got such a nice piece of mutton as this, and nobody else has got so much as a piece of dry

bread, it would do their hearts good to have somebody to eat it with them."

Just as he spoke there came a double knock at the house door, yet heavy and dull, as though the knocker had been tied up—more like a puff than a knock.

"It must be the wind," said Gluck; "nobody else would venture to knock double knocks at our door."

No; it wasn't the wind: there it came again very hard, and what was particularly astounding, the knocker seemed to be in a hurry, and not to be in the least afraid of the consequences. Gluck went to the window, opened it, and put his head out to see who it was.

It was the most extraordinary looking little gentleman he had ever seen in his life. He had a very large nose, slightly brass-coloured; his cheeks were very round, and very red, and might have warranted a supposition that he had been blowing a refractory fire for the last eight and forty hours; his eyes twinkled merrily through long silky eyelashes, his moustaches curled twice round like a corkscrew on each side of his mouth, and his hair, of a curious mixed pepper-and-salt colour, descended far over his shoulders. He was about four-feet-six in height, and wore a conical pointed cap of nearly the same altitude, decorated with a black feather some three feet long. His doublet was prolonged behind into something resembling a violent exaggeration of what is now termed a "swallow-tail," but was much obscured by the swelling folds of an enormous black, glossy-looking cloak, which must have been very much too long in calm weather, as the wind, whistling round the old house, carried it clear out from the wearer's shoulders to about four times his own length.

Gluck was so perfectly paralysed by the singular appearance of his visitor that he remained fixed without uttering a

word, until the old gentleman, having performed another, and a more energetic concerto on the knocker, turned round to look after his fly-away cloak. In so doing he caught sight of Gluck's little yellow head jammed in the window, with its mouth and eyes very wide open indeed.

"Hollo!" said the little gentleman, "that's not the way to answer the door. I'm wet, let me in."

To do the little gentleman justice, he *was* wet. His feather hung down between his legs like a beaten puppy's tail, dripping like an umbrella; and from the ends of his moustaches the water was running into his waistcoat pockets, and out again like a mill stream.

"I beg pardon, sir," said Gluck, "I'm very sorry, but I really can't."

"Can't what?" said the old gentleman.

"I can't let you in, sir—I can't indeed; my brothers would beat me to death, sir, if I thought of such a thing. What do you want, sir?"

"Want?" said the old gentleman, petulantly. "I want fire, and shelter; and there's your great fire there blazing, crackling, and dancing on the walls, with nobody to feel it. Let me in, I say; I only want to warm myself."

Gluck had had his head, by this time, so long out of the window that he began to feel it was really unpleasantly cold, and when he turned, and saw the beautiful fire rustling and roaring, and throwing long bright tongues up the chimney, as if it were licking its chops at the savory smell of the leg of mutton, his heart melted within him that it should be burning away for nothing. "He does look *very* wet," said little Gluck; "I'll just let him in for a quarter of an hour." Round he went to the door, and opened it; and as the little gentleman walked in, there came a gust of wind through the house, that made the old chimneys totter.

"That's a good boy," said the little gentleman. "Never mind your brothers. I'll talk to them."

"Pray, sir, don't do any such thing," said Gluck. "I can't let you stay till they come; they'd be the death of me."

"Dear me," said the old gentleman, "I'm very sorry to hear that. How long may I stay?"

"Only till the mutton's done, sir," replied Gluck, "and it's very brown."

Then the old gentleman walked into the kitchen, and sat himself down on the hob, with the top of his cap accommodated up the chimney, for it was a great deal too high for the roof.

"You'll soon dry there, sir," said Gluck, and sat down again to turn the mutton. But the old gentleman did *not* dry there, but went on drip, drip, dripping among the cinders, and the fire fizzed, and sputtered, and began to look very black, and uncomfortable: never was such a cloak; every fold in it ran like a gutter.

"I beg pardon, sir," said Gluck at length, after watching the water spreading in long, quicksilver-like streams over the floor for a quarter of an hour; "mayn't I take your cloak?"

"No, thank you," said the old gentleman.

"Your cap, sir?"

"I am all right, thank you," said the old gentleman rather gruffly.

"But—sir—I'm very sorry," said Gluck, hesitatingly; "but—really, sir—you're—putting the fire out."

"It'll take longer to do the mutton, then," replied his visitor dryly.

Gluck was very much puzzled by the behaviour of his guest, it was such a strange mixture of coolness and humility. He turned away at the string meditatively for another five minutes.

"That mutton looks very nice," said the old gentleman at length. "Can't you give me a little bit?"

"Impossible, sir," said Gluck.

"I'm very hungry," continued the old gentleman. "I've had nothing to eat yesterday, nor to-day. They surely couldn't miss a bit from the knuckle!"

He spoke in so very melancholy a tone, that it quite melted Gluck's heart. "They promised me one slice to-day, sir," said he; "I can give you that, but not a bit more."

"That's a good boy," said the old gentleman again.

Then Gluck warmed a plate and sharpened a knife. "I dont care if I do get beaten for it," thought he. Just as he had cut a large slice out of the mutton there came a tremendous rap at the door. The old gentleman jumped off the hob, as if it had suddenly become inconveniently warm. Gluck fitted the slice into the mutton again, with desperate efforts at exactitude, and ran to open the door.

"What did you keep us waiting in the rain for?" said Schwartz, as he walked in, throwing his umbrella in Gluck's face. "Ay! what for, indeed, you little vagabond?" said Hans, administering an educational box on the ear, as he followed his brother into the kitchen.

"Bless my soul!" said Schwartz when he opened the door.

"Amen," said the little gentleman, who had taken his cap off, and was standing in the middle of the kitchen, bowing with the utmost possible velocity.

"Who's that?" said Schwartz, catching up a rolling-pin, and turning to Gluck with a fierce frown.

"I don't know, indeed, brother," said Gluck in great terror.

"How did he get in?" roared Schwartz.

"My dear brother," said Gluck, deprecatingly, "he was so *very* wet!"

The rolling-pin was descending on Gluck's head; but, at the instant, the old gentleman interposed his conical cap, on which it crashed with a shock that shook the water out of it all over the room. What was very odd, the rolling-pin no sooner touched the cap than it flew out of Schwartz's hand, spinning like a straw in a high wind, and fell into the corner at the further end of the room.

"Who are you, sir?" demanded Schwartz, turning upon him.

"What's your business?" snarled Hans.

"I'm a poor old man, sir," the little gentleman began very modestly, "and I saw your fire through the window, and begged shelter for a quarter of an hour."

"Have the goodness to walk out again, then," said Schwartz. "We've quite enough water in our kitchen, without making it a drying-house."

"It is a cold day to turn an old man out in, sir; look at my gray hairs." They hung down to his shoulders, as I told you before.

"Ay!" said Hans, "there are enough of them to keep you warm. Walk!"

"I'm very, very hungry, sir; couldn't you spare me a bit of bread before I go?"

"Bread indeed!" said Schwartz; "do you suppose we've nothing to do with our bread but to give it to such red-nosed fellows as you?"

"Why don't you sell your feather?" said Hans, sneeringly. "Out with you!"

"A little bit," said the old gentleman.

"Be off!" said Schwartz.

"Pray, gentlemen——"

"Off, and be hanged!" cried Hans, seizing him by the collar. But he had no sooner touched the old gentleman's

collar, than away he went after the tolling-pin, spinning round and round, till he fell into the corner on the top of it. Then Schwartz was very angry, and ran at the old gentleman to turn him out; but he also had hardly touched him, when away he went after Hans and the rolling-pin, and hit his head against the wall as he tumbled into the corner. And so there they lay, all three.

Then the old gentleman spun himself round with velocity in the opposite direction; continued to spin until his long cloak was all wound neatly about him; clapped his cap on his head, very much on one side (for it could not stand upright without going through the ceiling), gave an additional twist to his corkscrew moustaches, and replied with perfect coolness: "Gentlemen, I wish you a very good morning. At twelve o'clock to-night I'll call again; after such a refusal of hospitality as I have just experienced, you will not be surprised if that visit is the last I ever pay you."

"If ever I catch you here again," muttered Schwartz, coming half frightened out of his corner—but, before he could finish his sentence, the old gentleman had shut the house door behind him with a great bang: and there drove past the window, at the same instant, a wreath of ragged cloud, that whirled and rolled away down the valley in all manner of shapes; turning over and over in the air, and melting away at last in a gush of rain.

"A very pretty business, indeed, Mr. Gluck!" said Schwartz. "Dish the mutton, sir. If ever I catch you at such a trick again—bless me, why, the mutton's been cut!"

"You promised me one slice, brother, you know," said Gluck.

"Oh! and you were cutting it hot, I suppose, and going to catch all the gravy. It'll be long before I promise you

such a thing again. Leave the room, sir; and have the kindness to wait in the coal cellar till I call you."

Gluck left the room melancholy enough. The brothers ate as much mutton as they could, locked the rest in the cupboard and proceeded to get very drunk after dinner.

Such a night as it was! Howling wind, and rushing rain, without intermission. The brothers had just sense enough left to put up all the shutters, and double bar the door, before they went to bed. They usually slept in the same room. As the clock struck twelve, they were both awakened by a tremendous crash. Their door burst open with a violence that shook the house from top to bottom.

"What's that?" cried Schwartz, starting up in his bed.

"Only I," said the little gentleman.

The two brothers sat up on their bolster, and stared into the darkness. The room was full of water, and by a misty moonbeam, which found its way through a hole in the shutter, they could see in the midst of it an enormous foam globe, spinning round, and bobbing up and down like a cork, on which, as on a most luxurious cushion, reclined the little old gentleman, cap and all. There was plenty of room for it now, for the roof was off.

"Sorry to incommode you," said their visitor, ironically. "I'm afraid your beds are dampish; perhaps you had better go to your brother's room: I've left the ceiling on, there."

They required no second admonition, but rushed into Gluck's room, wet through, and in an agony of terror.

"You'll find my card on the kitchen table," the old gentleman called after them. "Remember the *last* visit."

"Pray Heaven it may!" said Schwartz, shuddering. And the foam globe disappeared.

Dawn came at last and the two brothers looked out of Gluck's little window in the morning. The Treasure Valley

was one mass of ruin and desolation. The inundation had swept away trees, crops, and cattle, and left in their stead a waste of red sand and gray mud. The two brothers crept shivering and horror-struck into the kitchen. The water had gutted the whole first floor; corn, money, almost every movable thing, had been swept away and there was left only a small white card on the kitchen table. On it, in large, breezy, long-legged letters, were engraved the words: *South-West Wind, Esquire.*

II.—OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE THREE BROTHERS AFTER THE VISIT OF SOUTHWEST WIND, ESQUIRE; AND HOW LITTLE GLUCK HAD AN INTERVIEW WITH THE KING OF THE GOLDEN RIVER.

Southwest Wind, Esquire, was as good as his word. After the momentous visit above related, he entered the Treasure Valley no more; and, what was worse, he had so much influence with his relations, the West Winds in general, and used it so effectually, that they all adopted a similar line of conduct. So no rain fell in the valley from one year's end to another. Though everything remained green and flourishing in the plains below, the inheritance of the Three Brothers was a desert. What had once been the richest soil in the kingdom, became a shifting heap of red sand; and the brothers, unable longer to contend with the adverse skies, abandoned their valueless patrimony in despair, to seek some means of gaining a livelihood among the cities and people of the plains. All their money was gone, and they had nothing left but some curious, old-fashioned pieces of gold plate, the last remnants of their ill-gotten wealth.

"Suppose we turn goldsmiths?" said Schwartz to Hans, as they entered the large city. "It is a good knave's trade· we

can put a great deal of copper into the gold, without any one's finding it out."

The thought was agreed to be a very good one; they hired a furnace, and turned goldsmiths. But two slight circumstances affected their trade: the first, that people did not approve of the coppered gold; the second, that the two elder brothers, whenever they had sold anything, used to leave little Gluck to mind the furnace, and go and drink out the money in the ale-house next door. So they melted all their gold, without making money enough to buy more, and were at last reduced to one large drinking-mug, which an uncle of his had given to little Gluck, and which he was very fond of, and would not have parted with for the world; though he never drank anything out of it but milk and water. The mug was a very odd mug to look at. The handle was formed of two wreaths of flowing golden hair, so finely spun that it looked more like silk than metal, and these wreaths descended into, and mixed with, a beard and whiskers of the same exquisite workmanship, which surrounded and decorated a very fierce little face, of the reddest gold imaginable, right in the front of the mug, with a pair of eyes in it which seemed to command its whole circumference. It was impossible to drink out of the mug without being subjected to an intense gaze out of the side of these eyes; and Schwartz positively averred, that once, after emptying it, full of Rhenish, seventeen times, he had seen them wink! When it came to the mug's turn to be made into spoons, it half broke poor little Gluck's heart: but the brothers only laughed at him, tossed the mug into the melting-pot, and staggered out to the ale-house: leaving him, as usual, to pour the gold into bars, when it was all ready.

When they were gone, Gluck took a farewell look at his old friend in the melting-pot. The flowing hair was all gone;

nothing remained but the red nose, and the sparkling eyes, which looked more malicious than ever. "And no wonder," thought Gluck, "after being treated in that way." He sauntered disconsolately to the window, and sat himself down to catch the fresh evening air, and escape the hot breath of the furnace. Now this window commanded a direct view of the range of mountains, which, as I told before, overhung the Treasure Valley, and more especially of the peak from which fell the Golden River. It was just at the close of the day, and when Gluck sat down at the window he saw the rocks of the mountain tops, all crimson and purple with the sunset; and there were bright tongues of fiery cloud burning and quivering about them; and the river, brighter than all, fell, in a waving column of pure gold, from precipice to precipice, with the double arch of a broad purple rainbow stretched across it, flushing and fading alternately in the wreaths of spray.

"Ah!" said Gluck aloud, after he had looked at it for a while, "if that river were really all gold, what a nice thing it would be."

"No it wouldn't, Gluck," said a clear, metallic voice close at his ear.

"Bless me! what's that?" exclaimed Gluck, jumping up. There was nobody there. He looked round the room, and under the table, and a great many times behind him, but there was certainly nobody there, and he sat down again at the window. This time he didn't speak, but he couldn't help thinking again that it would be very convenient if the river were really all gold.

"Not at all, my boy," said the same voice, louder than before.

"Bless me!" said Gluck again; "what *is* that?" He looked again into all the corners and cupboards, and then

began turning round, and round, as fast as he could in the middle of the room, thinking there was somebody behind him, when the same voice struck again on his ear. It was singing now very merrily, "Lala-lira-la;" no words, only a soft running, effervescent melody, something like that of a kettle on the boil. Gluck looked out of the window. No, it was certainly in the house. Upstairs, and downstairs. No, it was certainly in that very room, coming in quicker time, and clearer notes, every moment. "Lala-lira-la." All at once it struck Gluck that it sounded louder near the furnace. He ran to the opening, and looked in: yes, he saw right; it seemed to be coming, not only out of the furnace, but out of the pot. He uncovered it, and ran back in a great fright, for the pot was certainly singing! He stood in the farthest corner of the room, with his hands up, and his mouth open, for a minute or two, when the singing stopped, and the voice became clear and pronunciative.

"Hollo!" said the voice.

Gluck made no answer.

"Hollo! Gluck, my boy," said the pot again.

Gluck summoned all his energies, walked straight up to the crucible, drew it out of the furnace, and looked in. The gold was all melted, and its surface as smooth and polished as a river; but instead of reflecting little Gluck's head, as he looked in, he saw meeting his glance from beneath the gold the red nose and sharp eyes of his old friend of the mug, a thousand times redder and sharper than ever he had seen them in his life.

"Come, Gluck, my boy," said the voice out of the pot again, "I'm all right; pour me out."

But Gluck was too much astonished to do anything of the kind.

"Pour me out, I say," said the voice rather gruffly.

Still Gluck couldn't move.

"*Will* you pour me out?" said the voice passionately. "I'm too hot."

By a violent effort, Gluck recovered the use of his limbs, took hold of the crucible, and sloped it so as to pour out the gold. But instead of a liquid stream, there came out, first, a pair of pretty little yellow legs, then some coat tails, then a pair of arms stuck akimbo, and, finally, the well-known head of his friend the mug; all which articles, uniting as they rolled out, stood up energetically on the floor, in the shape of a little golden dwarf, about a foot and a half high.

"That's right!" said the dwarf, stretching out first his legs, and then his arms, and then shaking his head up and down, and as far round as it would go, for five minutes without stopping; apparently with the view of ascertaining if he were quite correctly put together, while Gluck stood contemplating him in speechless amazement. He was dressed in a slashed doublet of spun gold, so fine in its texture, that the prismatic colours gleamed over it, as if on a surface of mother-of-pearl; and, over this brilliant doublet, his hair and beard fell full halfway to the ground, in waving curls, so exquisitely delicate that Gluck could hardly tell where they ended; they seemed to melt into air. The features of the face, however, were by no means finished with the same delicacy; they were rather coarse, slightly inclining to coppery in complexion, and indicative, in expression, of a very pertinacious and intractable disposition in their small proprietor. When the dwarf had finished his self-examination, he turned his small eyes full on Gluck, and stared at him deliberately for a minute or two. "No, it wouldn't, Gluck, my boy," said the little man.

This was certainly rather an abrupt and unconnected mode of commencing conversation. It might indeed be supposed to refer to the course of Gluck's thoughts, which

had first produced the dwarf's observations out of the pot; but whatever it referred to, Gluck had no inclination to dispute the dictum.

"Wouldn't it, sir?" said Gluck, very mildly and submissively indeed.

"No," said the dwarf, conclusively. "No, it wouldn't." And with that, the dwarf pulled his cap hard over his brows, and took two turns, of three feet long, up and down the room, lifting his legs up very high, and setting them down very hard. This pause gave time for Gluck to collect his thoughts a little, and, seeing no great reason to view his diminutive visitor with dread, and feeling his curiosity overcome his amazement, he ventured on a question of peculiar delicacy.

"Pray, sir," said Gluck, rather hesitatingly, "were you my mug?"

On which the little man turned sharp round, walked straight up to Gluck, and drew himself up to his full height. "I," said the little man, "am the King of the Golden River." Whereupon he turned about again, and took two more turns, some six feet long, in order to allow time for the consternation which this announcement produced in his auditor to evaporate. After which, he again walked up to Gluck and stood still, as if expecting some comment on his communication.

Gluck determined to say something at all events. "I hope your Majesty is very well," said Gluck.

"Listen!" said the little man, deigning no reply to this polite inquiry. "I am the King of what you mortals call the Golden River. The shape you saw me in was owing to the malice of a stronger king, from whose enchantments you have this instant freed me. What I have seen of you, and your conduct to your wicked brothers, renders me willing to serve you; therefore, attend to what I tell you. Whoever shall climb to the top of that mountain from which

you see the Golden River issue, and shall cast into the stream at its source three drops of holy water, for him, and for him only, the river shall turn to gold. But no one failing in his first, can succeed in a second attempt; and if anyone shall cast unholy water into the river, it will overwhelm him, and he will become a black stone." So saying, the King of the Golden River turned away and deliberately walked into the centre of the hottest flame of the furnace. His figure became red, white, transparent, dazzling—a blaze of intense light—rose, trembled, and disappeared. The King of the Golden River had evaporated.

"Oh!" cried poor Gluck, running to look up the chimney after him; "oh dear, dear, dear me! My mug! my mug! my mug!"

III.—HOW MR. HANS SET OFF ON AN EXPEDITION TO THE GOLDEN RIVER, AND HOW HE PROSPERED THEREIN

The King of the Golden River had hardly made the extraordinary exit related in the last chapter, before Hans and Schwartz came roaring into the house, very savagely drunk. The discovery of the total loss of their last piece of plate had the effect of sobering them just enough to enable them to stand over Gluck, beating him very steadily for a quarter of an hour; at the expiration of which period they dropped into a couple of chairs, and requested to know what he had to say for himself. Gluck told them his story, of which, of course, they did not believe a word. They beat him again, till their arms were tired, and staggered to bed. In the morning, however, the steadiness with which he adhered to his story obtained him some degree of credence; the immediate consequence of which was, that the two brothers, after wrangling a long time on the knotty question, which

of them should try his fortune first, drew their swords and began fighting. The noise of the fray alarmed the neighbours who, finding they could not pacify the combatants, sent for the constable.

Hans, on hearing this, contrived to escape, and hid himself; but Schwartz was taken before the magistrate, fined for breaking the peace, and, having drunk out his last penny the evening before, was thrown into prison till he should pay.

When Hans heard this, he was much delighted, and determined to set out immediately for the Golden River. How to get the holy water was the question. He went to the priest, but the priest could not give any holy water to so abandoned a character. So Hans went to vespers in the evening for the first time in his life, and, under pretence of crossing himself, stole a cupful and returned home in triumph.

Next morning he got up before the sun rose, put the holy water into a strong flask, and two bottles of wine and some meat in a basket, slung them over his back, took his alpine staff in his hand, and set off for the mountains.

On his way out of the town he had to pass the prison, and as he looked in at the windows, whom should he see but Schwartz himself peeping out of the bars, and looking very disconsolate.

"Good morning, brother," said Hans; "have you any message for the King of the Golden River?"

Schwartz gnashed his teeth with rage, and shook the bars with all his strength; but Hans only laughed at him, and advising him to make himself comfortable till he came back again, shouldered his basket, shook the bottle of holy water in Schwartz's face till it frothed again, and marched off in the highest spirits in the world.

It was, indeed, a morning that might have made anyone happy, even with no Golden River to seek for. Level lines of dewy mist lay stretched along the valley, out of which rose the massy mountains—their lower cliffs in pale gray shadow, hardly distinguishable from the floating vapour, but gradually ascending till they caught the sunlight, which ran in sharp touches of ruddy colour along the angular crags, and pierced, in long level rays, through their fringes of spear-like pine. Far above, shot up red splintered masses of castellated rock, jagged and shivered into myriads of fantastic forms, with here and there a streak of sunlit snow, traced down their chasms like a line of forked lightning; and, far beyond, and far above all these, fainter than the morning cloud, but purer and changeless, slept, in the blue sky, the utmost peaks of the eternal snow.

The Golden River, which sprang from one of the lower and snowless elevations, was now nearly in shadow; all but the uppermost jets of spray, which rose like slow smoke above the undulating line of the cataract, and floated away in feeble wreaths upon the morning wind.

On this object, and on this alone, Hans's eyes and thoughts were fixed; forgetting the distance he had to traverse, he set off at an imprudent rate of walking, which greatly exhausted him before he had scaled the first range of the green and low hills. He was, moreover, surprised, on surmounting them, to find that a large glacier, of whose existence, notwithstanding his previous knowledge of the mountains, he had been absolutely ignorant, lay between him and the source of the Golden River. He entered on it with the boldness of a practised mountaineer; yet he thought he had never traversed so strange or so dangerous a glacier in his life. The ice was excessively slippery, and out of all its chasms came wild sounds of gushing water; not monotonous or low,

but changeful and loud, rising occasionally into drifting passages of wild melody, then breaking off into short melancholy tones, or sudden shrieks, resembling those of human voices in distress or pain. The ice was broken into thousands of confused shapes, but none, Hans thought, like the ordinary forms of splintered ice. There seemed a curious *expression* about all their outlines—a perpetual resemblance to living features, distorted and scornful. Myriads of deceitful shadows, and lurid lights, played and floated about and through the pale-blue pinnacles, dazzling and confusing the sight of the traveller; while his ears grew dull and his head giddy with the constant gush and roar of the concealed waters. These painful circumstances increased upon him as he advanced; the ice crashed and yawned into fresh chasms at his feet, tottering spires nodded around him, and fell thundering across his path; and, though he had repeatedly faced these dangers on the most terrific glaciers, and in the wildest weather, it was with a new and oppressive feeling of panic terror that he leaped the last chasm, and flung himself, exhausted and shuddering, on the firm turf of the mountain.

He had been compelled to abandon his basket of food, which became a perilous incumbrance on the glacier, and had now no means of refreshing himself but by breaking off and eating some of the pieces of ice. This, however, relieved his thirst; an hour's repose recruited his hardy frame, and, with the indomitable spirit of avarice, he resumed his laborious journey.

His way now lay straight up a ridge of bare red rocks, without a blade of grass to ease the foot, or a projecting angle to afford an inch of shade from the south sun. It was past noon, and the rays beat intensely upon the steep path, while the whole atmosphere was motionless, and penetrated with

heat. Intense thirst was soon added to the bodily fatigue with which Hans was now afflicted; glance after glance he cast on the flask of water which hung at his belt. "Three drops are enough," at last thought he; "I may, at least, cool my lips with it."

He opened the flask, and was raising it to his lips, when his eye fell on an object lying on the rock beside him; he thought it moved. It was a small dog, apparently in the last agony of death from thirst. Its tongue was out, its jaws dry, its limbs extended lifelessly, and a swarm of black ants were crawling about its lips and throat. Its eye moved to the bottle which Hans held in his hand. He raised it, drank, spurned the animal with his foot, and passed on. And he did not know how it was, but he thought that a strange shadow had suddenly come across the blue sky.

The path became steeper and more rugged every moment; and the high hill air, instead of refreshing him, seemed to throw his blood into a fever. The noise of the hill cataracts sounded like mockery in his ears; they were all distant, and his thirst increased every moment. Another hour passed, and he again looked down to the flask at his side; it was half empty; but there was much more than three drops in it. He stopped to open it, and again, as he did so, something moved in the path above him. It was a fair child, stretched nearly lifeless on the rock, its breast heaving with thirst, its eyes closed, and its lips parched and burning. Hans eyed it deliberately, drank, and passed on. And a dark-gray cloud came over the sun, and long, snake-like shadows crept up along the mountain sides. Hans struggled on. The sun was sinking, but its descent seemed to bring no coolness; the leaden weight of the dead air pressed upon his brow and heart, but the goal was near. He saw the cataract of the Golden River springing from the hillside, scarcely five hundred feet

above him. He paused for a moment to breathe, and sprang on to complete his task.

At this instant a faint cry fell on his ear. He turned, and saw a gray-haired old man extended on the rocks. His eyes were sunk, his features deadly pale, and gathered into an expression of despair. "Water!" he stretched his arms to Hans, and cried feebly, "Water! I am dying."

"I have none," replied Hans; "thou hast had thy share of life." He strode over the prostrate body, and darted on. And a flash of blue lightning rose out of the east, shaped like a sword; it shook thrice over the whole heaven, and left it dark with one heavy, impenetrable shade. The sun was setting; it plunged toward the horizon like a red-hot ball.

The roar of the Golden River rose on Hans's ear. He stood at the brink of the chasm through which it ran. Its waves were filled with the red glory of the sunset: they shook their crests like tongues of fire, and flashes of bloody light gleamed along their foam. Their sound came mightier and mightier on his senses; his brain grew giddy with the prolonged thunder. Shuddering he drew the flask from his girdle, and hurled it into the centre of the torrent. As he did so, an icy chill shot through his limbs: he staggered, shrieked, and fell. The waters closed over his cry. And the moaning of the river rose wildly into the night, as it gushed over *The Black Stone*.

IV.—HOW MR. SCHWARTZ SET OFF ON AN EXPEDITION TO THE GOLDEN RIVER, AND HOW HE PROSPERED THEREIN

Poor little Gluck waited very anxiously alone in the house for Hans's return. Finding he did not come back, he was terribly frightened, and went and told Schwartz in the prison all that had happened. Then Schwartz was very much pleased,

and said that Hans must certainly have been turned into a black stone, and he should have all the gold to himself. But Gluck was very sorry, and cried all night. When he got up in the morning there was no bread in the house, nor any money; so Gluck went and hired himself to another goldsmith, and he worked so hard, and so neatly, and so long every day, that he soon got money enough together to pay his brother's fine, and he went and gave it all to Schwartz, and Schwartz got out of prison. Then Schwartz was quite pleased, and said he should have some of the gold of the river. But Gluck only begged he would go and see what had become of Hans.

Now when Schwartz had heard that Hans had stolen the holy water, he thought to himself that such a proceeding might not be considered altogether correct by the King of the Golden River, and determined to manage matters better. So he took some more of Gluck's money, and went to a bad priest who gave him some holy water very readily for it. Then Schwartz was sure it was all quite right. So Schwartz got up early in the morning before the sun rose, and took some bread and wine in a basket, and put his holy water in a flask, and set off for the mountains. Like his brother, he was much surprised at the sight of the glacier, and had great difficulty in crossing it, even after leaving his basket behind him. The day was cloudless, but not bright: there was a heavy purple haze hanging over the sky, and the hills looked lowering and gloomy. And as Schwartz climbed the steep rock path, the thirst came upon him, as it had upon his brother, until he lifted his flask to his lips to drink. Then he saw the fair child lying near him on the rocks, and it cried to him, and moaned for water.

"Water, indeed," said Schwartz; "I haven't half enough for myself," and passed on. And as he went he thought the

sunbeams grew more dim, and he saw a low bank of black cloud rising out of the west; and, when he had climbed for another hour, the thirst overcame him again, and he would have drunk. Then he saw the old man lying before him on the path, and heard him cry out for water. "Water, indeed," said Schwartz; "I haven't half enough for myself," and on he went.

Then again the light seemed to fade from before his eyes, and he looked up, and, behold, a mist, of the colour of blood, had come over the sun; and the bank of black cloud had risen very high, and its edges were tossing and tumbling like the waves of an angry sea. And they cast long shadows, which flickered over Schwartz's path.

Then Schwartz climbed for another hour, and again his thirst returned; and as he lifted his flask to his lips, he thought he saw his brother Hans lying exhausted on the path before him; and, as he gazed, the figure stretched its arms to him, and cried for water. "Ha, ha," laughed Schwartz, "are you there? Remember the prison bars, my boy. Water indeed! Do you suppose I carried it all the way up here for *you?*" And he strode over the figure; yet, as he passed, he thought he saw a strange expression of mockery about its lips. And, when he had gone a few yards farther, he looked back; but the figure was not there.

And a sudden horror came over Schwartz, he knew not why; but the thirst for gold prevailed over his fear, and he rushed on. And the bank of black cloud rose to the zenith, and out of it came bursts of spiry lightning, and waves of darkness seemed to heave and float between their flashes over the whole heavens. And the sky where the sun was setting was all level, and like a lake of blood; and a strong wind came out of that sky, tearing its crimson clouds into fragments, and scattering them far into the darkness. And

when Schwartz stood by the brink of the Golden River, its waves were black, like thunder clouds, but their foam was like fire; and the roar of the waters below, and the thunder above, met, as he cast the flask into the stream. And, as he did so, the lightning glared into his eyes, and the earth gave way beneath him, and the waters closed over his cry. And the moaning of the river rose wildly into the night, as it gushed over the *Two Black Stones*.

V.—HOW LITTLE GLUCK SET OFF ON AN EXPEDITION TO THE GOLDEN RIVER, AND HOW HE PROSPERED THEREIN; WITH OTHER MATTERS OF INTEREST

When Gluck found that Schwartz did not come back he was very sorry, and did not know what to do. He had no money, and was obliged to go and hire himself again to the goldsmith, who worked him very hard, and gave him very little money. So, after a month or two, Gluck grew tired, and made up his mind to go and try his fortune with the Golden River. "The little king looked very kind," thought he. "I don't think he will turn me into a black stone." So he went to the priest, and the priest gave him some holy water as soon as he asked for it. Then Gluck took some bread in his basket, and the bottle of water, and set off very early for the mountains.

If the glacier had occasioned a great deal of fatigue to his brothers, it was twenty times worse for him, who was neither so strong nor so practised on the mountains. He had several very bad falls, lost his basket and bread, and was very much frightened at the strange noises under the ice. He lay a long time to rest on the grass, after he had got over, and began to climb the hill in just the hottest part of the day. When he had climbed for an hour, he got dreadfully thirsty, and was

going to drink like his brothers, when he saw an old man coming down the path above him, looking very feeble, and leaning on a staff. "My son," said the old man, "I am faint with thirst, give me some of that water." Then Gluck looked at him, and, when he saw that he was pale and weary, he gave him the water; "Only pray don't drink it all," said Gluck. But the old man drank a great deal, and gave him back the bottle two-thirds empty. Then he bade him good speed, and Gluck went on again merrily. And the path became easier to his feet, and two or three blades of grass appeared upon it, and some grasshoppers began singing on the bank beside it; and Gluck thought he had never heard such merry singing.

Then he went on for another hour, and the thirst increased on him so that he thought he should be forced to drink. But, as he raised the flask, he saw a little child lying panting by the roadside, and it cried out piteously for water. Then Gluck struggled with himself, and determined to bear the thirst a little longer; and he put the bottle to the child's lips, and it drank it all but a few drops. Then it smiled on him, and got up, and ran down the hill; and Gluck looked after it till it became as small as a little star, and then turned and began climbing again. And then there were all kinds of sweet flowers growing on the rocks, bright green moss, with pale pink starry flowers, and soft belled gentians, more blue than the sky at its deepest, and pure white transparent lilies. And crimson and purple butterflies darted hither and thither, and the sky sent down such pure light, that Gluck had never felt so happy in his life.

Yet, when he had climbed for another hour, his thirst became intolerable again; and, when he looked at his bottle, he saw that there were only five or six drops left in it, and he could not venture to drink. And, as he was hanging the

flask to his belt again, he saw a little dog lying on the rocks, gasping for breath—just as Hans had seen it on the day of his ascent. And Gluck stopped and looked at it and then at the Golden River, not five hundred yards above him; and he thought of the dwarf's words, "that no one could succeed, except in his first attempt"; and he tried to pass the dog, but it whined piteously, and Gluck stopped again. "Poor beastie!" said Gluck: "it'll be dead when I come down again, if I don't help it." Then he looked closer and closer at it, and its eye turned on him so mournfully that he could not stand it. "Confound the King and his gold too," said Gluck; and he opened the flask, and poured all the water into the dog's mouth.

The dog sprang up and stood on its hind legs. Its tail disappeared, its ears became long, longer, silky, golden; its nose became very red, its eyes became very twinkling; in three seconds the dog was gone, and before Gluck stood his old acquaintance, the King of the Golden River.

"Thank you," said the monarch; "but don't be frightened, it's all right"; for Gluck showed manifest symptoms of consternation at this unlooked-for reply to his last observation. "Why didn't you come before," continued the dwarf, "instead of sending me those rascally brothers of yours, for me to have the trouble of turning into stones? Very hard stones they make too."

"Oh dear me!" said Gluck; "have you really been so cruel?"

"Cruel!" said the dwarf, "they poured unholy water into my stream; do you suppose I'm going to allow that?"

"Why," said Gluck, "I am sure, sir—your Majesty, I mean—they got the water out of the church font."

"Very probably," replied the dwarf; "but," and his countenance grew stern as he spoke, "the water which has

been refused to the cry of the weary and dying is unholy, though it had been blessed by every saint in heaven; and the water which is found in the vessel of mercy is holy, though it had been defiled with corpses."

So saying, the dwarf stooped and plucked a lily that grew at his feet. On its white leaves there hung three drops of clear dew. And the dwarf shook them into the flask which Gluck held in his hand. "Cast these into the river," he said, "and descend on the other side of the mountains into the Treasure Valley. And so good speed."

As he spoke, the figure of the dwarf became indistinct. The playing colours of his robe formed themselves into a prismatic mist of dewy light; he stood for an instant veiled with them as with the belt of a broad rainbow. The colours grew faint, the mist rose into the air; the monarch had evaporated.

And Gluck climbed to the brink of the Golden River, and its waves were as clear as crystal, and as brilliant as the sun. And, when he cast the three drops of dew into the stream, there opened where they fell a small circular whirlpool, into which the waters descended with a musical noise.

Gluck stood watching it for some time, very much disappointed, because not only the river was not turned into gold, but its waters seemed much diminished in quantity. Yet he obeyed his friend the dwarf, and descended the other side of the mountains toward the Treasure Valley; and, as he went, he thought he heard the noise of water working its way under the ground. And, when he came in sight of the Treasure Valley, behold, a river, like the Golden River was springing from a new cleft of the rocks above it, and was flowing in innumerable streams among the dry heaps of red sand.

And as Gluck gazed, fresh grass sprang beside the new

streams, and creeping plants grew, and climbed among the moistening soil. Young flowers opened suddenly along the river sides, as stars leap out when twilight is deepening, and thickets of myrtle, and tendrils of vine, cast lengthening shadows over the valley as they grew. And thus the Treasure Valley became a garden again, and the inheritance which had been lost by cruelty was regained by love.

And Gluck went, and dwelt in the valley, and the poor were never driven from his door: so that his barns became full of corn, and his house of treasure. And, for him, the river had, according to the dwarf's promise, become a River of Gold.

And, to this day, the inhabitants of the valley point out the place where the three drops of holy dew were cast into the stream, and trace the course of the Golden River under the ground, until it emerges in the Treasure Valley. And at the top of the cataract of the Golden River are still to be seen two BLACK STONES, round which the waters howl mournfully every day at sunset, and these stones are still called by the people of the valley *The Black Brothers*.

III

THE SNOW-IMAGE: A CHILDISH MIRACLE

ONE afternoon of a cold winter's day, when the sun shone forth with chilly brightness, after a long storm, two children asked leave of their mother to run out and play in the new-fallen snow. The elder child was a girl, whom, because she was of a tender and modest disposition, and was thought to be very beautiful, her parents, and other people who were familiar with her, used to call Violet. But her brother was known by the style and title of Peony, on account of the ruddiness of his broad and round little phiz, which made everybody think of sunshine and great scarlet flowers. The father of these two children, a certain Mr. Lindsey, it is important to say, was an excellent but exceedingly matter-of-fact sort of man, a dealer in hardware, and was sturdily accustomed to take what is called the common-sense view of all matters that came under his consideration. With a heart about as tender as other people's, he had a head as hard and impenetrable, and therefore, perhaps, as empty, as one of the iron pots which it was a part of his business to sell. The mother's character, on the other hand, had a strain of poetry in it, a trait of unworldly beauty —a delicate and dewy flower, as it were, that had survived out of her imaginative youth, and still kept itself alive amid the dusty realities of matrimony and motherhood.

So, Violet and Peony, as I began with saying, besought their mother to let them run out and play in the new snow; for, though it had looked so dreary and dismal, drifting

downward out of the gray sky, it had a very cheerful aspect, now that the sun was shining on it. The children dwelt in a city, and had no wider play-place than a little garden before the house, divided by a white fence from the street, and with a pear-tree and two or three plum-trees overshadowing it, and some rose-bushes just in front of the parlour-windows. The trees and shrubs, however, were now leafless, and their twigs were enveloped in the light snow, which thus made a kind of wintry foliage, with here and there a pendent icicle for the fruit.

"Yes, Violet—yes, my little Peony," said their kind mother; "you may go out and play in the new snow."

Accordingly, the good lady bundled up her darlings in woollen jackets and wadded sacks, and put comforters round their necks, and a pair of striped gaiters on each little pair of legs, and worsted mittens on their hands, and gave them a kiss apiece, by way of a spell to keep away Jack Frost. Forth sallied the two children, with a hop-skip-and-jump, that carried them at once into the very heart of a huge snow-drift, whence Violet emerged like a snow-bunting, while little Peony floundered out with his round face in full bloom. Then what a merry time had they! To look at them, frolicking in the wintry garden, you would have thought that the dark and pitiless storm had been sent for no other purpose but to provide a new plaything for Violet and Peony; and that they themselves had been created, as the snow-birds were, to take delight only in the tempest, and in the white mantle which it spread over the earth.

At last, when they had frosted one another all over with handfuls of snow, Violet, after laughing heartily at little Peony's figure, was struck with a new idea.

"You look exactly like a snow-image, Peony," said she, "if your cheeks were not so red. And that puts me in mind!

Let us make an image out of snow—an image of a little girl—and it shall be our sister, and shall run about and play with us all winter long. Won't it be nice?"

"O, yes!" cried Peony, as plainly as he could speak, for he was but a little boy. "That will be nice! And mamma shall see it!"

"Yes," answered Violet; "mamma shall see the new little girl. But she must not make her come into the warm parlour; for, you know, our little snow-sister will not love the warmth."

And forthwith the children began this great business of making a snow-image that should run about; while their mother, who was sitting at the window and overheard some of their talk, could not help smiling at the gravity with which they set about it. They really seemed to imagine that there would be no difficulty whatever in creating a live little girl out of the snow. And, to say the truth, if miracles are ever to be wrought, it will be by putting our hands to the work in precisely such a simple and undoubting frame of mind as that in which Violet and Peony now undertook to perform one, without so much as knowing that it was a miracle. So thought the mother; and thought, likewise, that the new snow, just fallen from heaven, would be excellent material to make new beings of, if it were not so very cold. She gazed at the children a moment longer, delighting to watch their little figures—the girl, tall for her age, graceful and agile, and so delicately coloured that she looked like a cheerful thought, more than a physical reality; while Peony expanded in breadth rather than height, and rolled along on his short and sturdy legs as substantial as an elephant, though not quite so big. Then the mother resumed her work. What it was I forget; but she was either trimming a silken bonnet for Violet, or darning a pair of stockings for

little Peony's short legs. Again, however, and again, and yet other agains, she could not help turning her head to the window to see how the children got on with their snow-image.

Indeed, it was an exceedingly pleasant sight, those bright little souls at their task! Moreover, it was really wonderful to observe how knowingly and skilfully they managed the matter. Violet assumed the chief direction, and told Peony what to do, while, with her own delicate fingers, she shaped out all the nicer parts of the snow-figure, It seemed, in fact, not so much to be made by the children, as to grow up under their hands, while they were playing and prattling about it. Their mother was quite surprised at this; and the longer she looked, the more and more surprised she grew.

"What remarkable children mine are!" thought she, smiling with a mother's pride; and, smiling at herself, too, for being so proud of them. "What other children could have made anything so like a little girl's figure out of snow at the first trial? Well; but now I must finish Peony's new frock, for his grandfather is coming to-morrow, and I want the little fellow to look handsome."

So she took up the frock, and was soon as busily at work again with her needle as the two children with their snow-image. But still, as the needle travelled hither and thither through the seams of the dress, the mother made her toil light and happy by listening to the airy voices of Violet and Peony. They kept talking to one another all the time, their tongues being quite as active as their feet and hands. Except at intervals, she could not distinctly hear what was said, but had merely a sweet impression that they were in a most loving mood, and were enjoying themselves highly, and that the business of making the snow-image went prosperously

on. Now and then, however, when Violet and Peony happened to raise their voices, the words were as audible as if they had been spoken in the very parlour, where the mother sat. O how delightfully those words echoed in her heart, even though they meant nothing so very wise or wonderful, after all!

But you must know a mother listens with her heart, much more than with her ears; and thus she is often delighted with the trills of celestial music, when other people can hear nothing of the kind.

"Peony, Peony!" cried Violet to her brother, who had gone to another part of the garden, "bring me some of that fresh snow, Peony, from the very farthest corner, where we have not been trampling. I want it to shape our little snow-sister's bosom with. You know that part must be quite pure, just as it came out of the sky!"

"Here it is, Violet!" answered Peony, in his bluff tone—but a very sweet tone, too—as he came floundering through the half-trodden drifts. "Here is the snow for her little bosom. O Violet, how beau-ti-ful she begins to look!"

"Yes," said Violet, thoughtfully and quietly; "our snow-sister does look very lovely. I did not quite know, Peony, that we could make such a sweet little girl as this."

The mother, as she listened, thought how fit and delightful an incident it would be, if fairies, or, still better, if angel-children were to come from paradise, and play invisibly with her own darlings, and help them to make their snow-image, giving it the features of celestial babyhood! Violet and Peony would not be aware of their immortal playmates—only they could see that the image grew very beautiful while they worked at it, and would think that they themselves had done it all.

"My little girl and boy deserve such playmates, if mortal

children ever did!" said the mother to herself; and then she smiled again at her own motherly pride.

Nevertheless, the ideas seized upon her imagination; and ever and anon, she took a glimpse out of the window, half dreaming that she might see the golden-haired children of paradise sporting with her own golden-haired Violet and bright-cheeked Peony.

Now, for a few moments, there was a busy and earnest, but indistinct hum of the two children's voices, as Violet and Peony wrought together with one happy consent. Violet still seemed to be the guiding spirit, while Peony acted rather as a labourer, and brought her the snow from far and near. And yet the little urchin evidently had a proper understanding of the matter, too!

"Peony, Peony!" cried Violet; for the brother was again at the other side of the garden. "Bring me those light wreaths of snow that have rested on the lower branches of the pear-tree. You can clamber on the snow-drift, Peony, and reach them easily. I must have them to make some ringlets for our snow-sister's head!"

"Here they are, Violet!" answered the little boy. "Take care you do not break them. Well done! Well done! How pretty!"

"Does she not look sweet?" said Violet, with a very satisfied tone; "and now we must have some little shining bits of ice, to make the brightness of her eyes. She is not finished yet. Mamma will see how very beautiful she is; but papa will say, 'Tush! nonsense!—come in out of the cold!'"

"Let us call mamma to look out," said Peony; and then he shouted lustily, "Mamma! mamma!! mamma!!! Look out, and see what a nice 'ittle girl we are making."

The mother put down her work, for an instant, and looked

out of the window. But it so happened that the sun—for this was one of the shortest days of the whole year—had sunken so nearly to the edge of the world, that his setting shine came obliquely into the lady's eyes. So she was dazzled, you must understand, and could not very distinctly observe what was in the garden. Still, however, through all that bright, blinding dazzle of the sun and the new snow, she beheld a small white figure in the garden, that seemed to have a wonderful deal of human likeness about it. And she saw Violet and Peony—indeed, she looked more at them than at the image—she saw the two children still at work; Peony bringing fresh snow, and Violet applying it to the figure as scientifically as a sculptor adds clay to his model. Indistinctly as she discerned the snow-child, the mother thought to herself that never before was there a snow-figure so cunningly made, nor ever such a dear little girl and boy to make it.

"They do everything better than other children," said she, very complacently. "No wonder they make better snow-images!"

She sat down again to her work, and made as much haste with it as possible; because twilight would soon come, and Peony's frock was not yet finished, and grandfather was expected, by railroad, pretty early in the morning. Faster and faster, therefore, went her flying fingers. The children, likewise, kept busily at work in the garden, and still the mother listened, whenever she could catch a word. She was amused to observe how their little imaginations had got mixed up with what they were doing, and were carried away by it. They seemed positively to think that the snow-child would run about and play with them.

"What a nice playmate she will be for us, all winter long!" said Violet. "I hope papa will not be afraid of her giving us a cold! Sha'n't you love her dearly, Peony?"

"O yes!" cried Peony. "And I will hug her and she shall sit down close by me, and drink some of my warm milk!"

"O no, Peony!" answered Violet, with grave wisdom. "That will not do at all. Warm milk will not be wholesome for our little snow-sister. Little snow-people, like her, eat nothing but icicles. No, no, Peony; we must not give her anything warm to drink!"

There was a minute or two of silence; for Peony, whose short legs were never weary, had gone on a pilgrimage again to the other side of the garden. All of a sudden, Violet cried out, loudly and joyfully——

"Look here, Peony! Come quickly! A light has been shining on her cheek out of that rose-coloured cloud! and the colour does not go away! Is not that beautiful!"

"Yes; it is beau-ti-ful," answered Peony, pronouncing the three syllables with deliberate accuracy. "O Violet, only look at her hair! It is all like gold!"

"O, certainly," said Violet, with tranquillity, as if it were very much a matter of course. "That colour, you know, comes from the golden clouds, that we see up there in the sky. She is almost finished now. But her lips must be made very red—redder than her cheeks. Perhaps, Peony, it will make them red if we both kiss them!"

Accordingly, the mother heard two smart little smacks, as if both her children were kissing the snow-image on its frozen mouth. But, as this did not seem to make the lips quite red enough, Violet next proposed that the snow-child should be invited to kiss Peony's scarlet cheek.

"Come, 'ittle snow-sister, kiss me!" cried Peony.

"There! she has kissed you," added Violet, "and now her lips are very red. And she blushed a little, too!"

"O, what a cold kiss!" cried Peony.

Just then, there came a breeze of the pure west-wind, sweeping through the garden and rattling the parlour-windows. It sounded so wintry cold, that the mother was about to tap on the window-pane with her thimbled finger, to summon the two children in, when they both cried out to her with one voice. The tone was not a tone of surprise, although they were evidently a good deal excited; it appeared rather as if they were very much rejoiced at some event that had now happened, but which they had been looking for, and had reckoned upon all along.

"Mamma! mamma! We have finished our little snow-sister, and she is running about the garden with us!"

"What imaginative little beings my children are!" thought the mother, putting the last few stitches into Peony's frock. "And it is strange, too, that they make me almost as much a child as they themselves are! I can hardly help believing, now, that the snow-image has really come to life!"

"Dear mamma!" cried Violet, "pray look out and see what a sweet playmate we have!"

The mother, being thus entreated, could no longer delay to look forth from the window. The sun was now gone out of the sky, leaving, however, a rich inheritance of his brightness among those purple and golden clouds which make the sunsets of winter so magnificent. But there was not the slightest gleam or dazzle, either on the window or on the snow; so that the good lady could look all over the garden, and see everything and everybody in it. And what do you think she saw there? Violet and Peony, of course, her own two darling children. Ah, but whom or what did she see besides? Why, if you will believe me, there was a small figure of a girl, dressed all in white, with rose-tinged cheeks and ringlets of golden hue, playing about the garden with the two children! A stranger though she was, the child

seemed to be on as familiar terms with Violet and Peony, and they with her, as if all the three had been playmates during the whole of their little lives. The mother thought to herself that it must certainly be the daughter of one of the neighbours, and that, seeing Violet, and Peony in the garden, the child had run across the street to play with them. So this kind lady went to the door, intending to invite the little runaway into her comfortable parlour; for, now that the sunshine was withdrawn, the atmosphere, out of doors, was already growing very cold.

But, after opening the house-door, she stood an instant on the threshold, hesitating whether she ought to ask the child to come in, or whether she should even speak to her. Indeed, she almost doubted whether it were a real child, after all, or only a light wreath of the new-fallen snow, blown hither and thither about the garden by the intensely cold west-wind. There was certainly something very singular in the aspect of the little stranger. Among all the children of the neighbourhood, the lady could remember no such face, with its pure white, and delicate rose-colour, and the golden ringlets tossing about the forehead and cheeks. And as for her dress, which was entirely of white, and fluttering in the breeze, it was such as no reasonable woman would put upon a little girl, when sending her out to play, in the depth of winter. It made this kind and careful mother shiver only to look at those small feet, with nothing in the world on them, except a very thin pair of white slippers. Nevertheless, airily as she was clad, the child seemed to feel not the slightest inconvenience from the cold, but danced so lightly over the snow that the tips of her toes left hardly a print in its surface; while Violet could but just keep pace with her, and Peony's short legs compelled him to lag behind.

Once, in the course of their play, the strange child placed

herself between Violet and Peony, and taking a hand of each, skipped merrily forward, and they along with her. Almost immediately, however, Peony pulled away his little fist, and began to rub it as if the fingers were tingling with cold; while Violet also released herself, though with less abruptness, gravely remarking that it was better not to take hold of hands. The white-robed damsel said not a word, but danced about, just as merrily as before. If Violet and Peony did not choose to play with her, she could make just as good a playmate of the brisk and cold west-wind, which kept blowing her all about the garden, and took such liberties with her, that they seemed to have been friends for a long time. All this while, the mother stood on the threshold, wondering how a little girl could look so much like a flying snow-drift, or how a snow-drift could look so very like a little girl.

She called Violet, and whispered to her.

"Violet, my darling, what is this child's name?" asked she. "Does she live near us?"

"Why, dearest mamma," answered Violet, laughing to think that her mother did not comprehend so very plain an affair, "this is our little snow-sister, whom we have just been making!"

"Yes, dear mamma," cried Peony, running to his mother and looking up simply into her face, "This is our snow-image! Is it not a nice 'ittle child?"

At this instant a flock of snow-birds came flitting through the air. As was very natural, they avoided Violet and Peony. But—and this looked strange—they flew at once to the white-robed child, fluttered eagerly about her head, alighted on her shoulders, and seemed to claim her as an old acquaintance. She, on her part, was evidently as glad to see these little birds, old Winter's grandchildren, as they

were to see her, and welcomed them by holding out both her hands. Hereupon, they each and all tried to alight on her two palms and ten small fingers and thumbs, crowding one another off, with an immense fluttering of their tiny wings. One dear little bird nestled tenderly in her bosom; another put its bill to her lips. They were as joyous, all the while, and seemed as much in their element, as you may have seen them when sporting with a snow-storm.

Violet and Peony stood laughing at this pretty sight: for they enjoyed the merry time which their new playmate was having with their small-winged visitants, almost as much as if they themselves took part in it.

"Violet," said her mother, greatly perplexed, "tell me the truth, without any jest. Who is this little girl?"

"My darling mamma," answered Violet, looking seriously into her mother's face, and apparently surprised that she should need any further explanation, "I have told you truly who she is. It is our little snow-image, which Peony and I have been making. Peony will tell you so, as well as I."

"Yes, mamma," asseverated Peony, with much gravity in his crimson little phiz, "this is 'ittle snow-child. Is not she a nice one? But, mamma, her hand, is oh, so very cold!"

While mamma still hesitated what to think and what to do, the street-gate was thrown open, and the father of Violet and Peony appeared, wrapped in a pilot-cloth sack, with a fur cap drawn down over his ears, and the thickest of gloves upon his hands. Mr. Lindsey was a middle-aged man, with a weary and yet a happy look in his wind-flushed and frost-pinched face, as if he had been busy all the day long, and was glad to get back to his quiet home. His eyes brightened at the sight of his wife and children, although he could not help uttering a word or two of surprise, at finding the whole family in the open air, on so bleak a day, and after sunset

too. He soon perceived the little white stranger, sporting to and fro in the garden, like a dancing snow-wreath, and the flock of snow-birds fluttering about her head.

"Pray, what little girl may that be?" inquired this very sensible man. "Surely her mother must be crazy, to let her go out in such bitter weather as it has been to-day, with only that flimsy white gown and those thin slippers!"

"My dear husband," said his wife, "I know no more about the little thing than you do. Some neighbour's child, I suppose. Our Violet and Peony," she added, laughing at herself for repeating so absurd a story, "insist that she is nothing but a snow-image, which they have been busy about in the garden, almost all the afternoon."

As she said this, the mother glanced her eyes toward the spot where the children's snow-image had been made. What was her surprise, on perceiving that there was not the slightest trace of so much labour!—no image at all—no piled up heap of snow—nothing whatever, save the prints of little footsteps around a vacant space!

"This is very strange!" said she.

"What is strange, dear mother?" asked Violet. "Dear father, do not you see how it is? This is our snow-image, which Peony and I have made, because we wanted another playmate. Did not we, Peony?"

"Yes, papa," said crimson Peony. "This be our 'ittle snow-sister. Is she not beau-ti-ful? But she gave me such a cold kiss!"

"Pooh, nonsense, children!" cried their good, honest father, who, as we have already intimated, had an exceedingly common-sensible way of looking at matters. "Do not tell me of making live figures out of snow. Come, wife; this little stranger must not stay out in the bleak air a moment longer. We will bring her into the parlour; and you

shall give her a supper of warm bread and milk, and make her as comfortable as you can. Meanwhile, I will inquire among the neighbours; or, if necessary, send the city-crier about the streets, to give notice of a lost child."

So saying, this honest and very kind-hearted man was going toward the little white damsel, with the best intentions in the world. But Violet and Peony, each seizing their father by the hand, earnestly besought him not to make her come in.

"Dear father," cried Violet, putting herself before him, "it is true what I have been telling you! This is our little snow-girl, and she cannot live any longer than while she breathes the cold west-wind. Do not make her come into the hot room!"

"Yes, father," shouted Peony, stamping his little foot, so mightily was he in earnest, "this be nothing but our 'ittle snow-child! She will not love the hot fire!"

"Nonsense, children, nonsense, nonsense!" cried the father, half vexed, half laughing at what he considered their foolish obstinacy. "Run into the house, this moment! It is too late to play any longer, now. I must take care of this little girl immediately, or she will catch her death a-cold!"

"Husband! dear husband!" said his wife, in a low voice—for she had been looking narrowly at the snow-child, and was more perplexed than ever—there is something very singular in all this. You will think me foolish—but—but—may it not be that some invisible angel has been attracted by the simplicity and good faith with which our children set about their undertaking? May he not have spent an hour of his immortality in playing with those dear little souls? and so the result is what we call a miracle. No, no! Do not laugh at me; I see what a foolish thought it is!"

"My dear wife," replied the husband, laughing heartily, "you are as much a child as Violet and Peony."

And in one sense so she was, for all through life she had kept her heart full of childlike simplicity and faith, which was as pure and clear as crystal; and, looking at all matters through this transparent medium, she sometimes saw truths so profound, that other people laughed at them as nonsense and absurdity.

But now kind Mr. Lindsey had entered the garden, breaking away from his two children, who still sent their shrill voices after him, beseeching him to let the snow-child stay and enjoy herself in the cold west-wind. As he approached, the snow-birds took to flight. The little white damsel, also, fled backward, shaking her head, as if to say, "Pray, do not touch me!" and roguishly, as it appeared, leading him through the deepest of the snow. Once, the good man stumbled, and floundered down upon his face, so that, gathering himself up again, with the snow sticking to his rough pilot-cloth sack, he looked as white and wintry as a snow-image of the largest size. Some of the neighbours, meanwhile, seeing him from their windows, wondered what could possess poor Mr. Lindsey to be running about his garden in pursuit of a snow-drift, which the west-wind was driving hither and thither! At length, after a vast deal of trouble, he chased the little stranger into a corner, where she could not possibly escape him. His wife had been looking on, and, it being nearly twilight, was wonderstruck to observe how the snow-child gleamed and sparkled, and how she seemed to shed a glow all round about her; and when driven into the corner, she positively glistened like a star! It was a frosty kind of brightness, too like that of an icicle in the moonlight. The wife thought it strange that good Mr. Lindsey should see nothing remarkable in the snow-child's appearance.

"Come, you odd little thing!" cried the honest man, seizing her by the hand, "I have caught you at last, and will make you comfortable in spite of yourself. We will put a nice warm pair of worsted stockings on your frozen little feet, and you shall have a good thick shawl to wrap yourself in. Your poor white nose, I am afraid, is actually frost-bitten. But we will make it all right. Come along in."

And so, with a most benevolent smile on his sagacious visage, all purple as it was with the cold, this very well-meaning gentleman took the snow-child by the hand and led her towards the house. She followed him, droopingly and reluctant; for all the glow and sparkle was gone out of her figure; and whereas just before she had resembled a bright, frosty, star-gemmed evening, with a crimson gleam on the cold horizon, she now looked as dull and languid as a thaw. As kind Mr. Lindsey led her up the steps of the door, Violet and Peony looked into his face—their eyes full of tears, which froze before they could run down their cheeks —and again entreated him not to bring their snow-image into the house.

"Not bring her in!" exclaimed the kind-hearted man. "Why, you are crazy, my little Violet!—quite crazy, my small Peony! She is so cold, already, that her hand has almost frozen mine, in spite of my thick gloves. Would you have her freeze to death?"

His wife, as he came up the steps, had been taking another long, earnest, almost awe-stricken gaze at the little white stranger. She hardly knew whether it was a dream or no; but she could not help fancying that she saw the delicate print of Violet's fingers on the child's neck. It looked just as if, while Violet was shaping out the image, she had given it a gentle pat with her hand, and had neglected to smooth the impression quite away.

"After all, husband," said the mother, recurring to her idea that the angels would be as much delighted to play with Violet and Peony as she herself was—"after all, she does look strangely like a snow-image! I do believe she is made of snow!"

A puff of the west-wind blew against the snow-child, and again she sparkled like a star.

"Snow!" repeated good Mr. Lindsey, drawing the reluctant guest over this hospitable threshold. "No wonder she looks like snow. She is half frozen, poor little thing! But a good fire will put everything to rights."

Without further talk, and always with the same best intentions, this highly benevolent and common-sensible individual led the little white damsel—drooping, drooping, drooping, more and more—out of the frosty air, and into his comfortable parlour. A Heidenberg stove, filled to the brim with intensely burning anthracite, was sending a bright gleam through the isinglass of its iron door, and causing the vase of water on its top to fume and bubble with excitement. A warm, sultry smell was diffused throughout the room. A thermometer on the wall farthest from the stove stood at eighty degrees. The parlour was hung with red curtains, and covered with a red carpet, and looked just as warm as it felt. The difference betwixt the atmosphere here and the cold, wintry twilight out of doors, was like stepping at once from Nova Zembla to the hottest part of India, or from the North Pole into an oven. O, this was a fine place for the little white stranger!

The common-sensible man placed the snow-child on the hearth-rug, right in front of the hissing and fuming stove.

"Now she will be comfortable!" cried Mr. Lindsey, rubbing his hands and looking about him, with the pleasantest smile you ever saw. "Make yourself at home, my child."

Sad, sad and drooping, looked the little white maiden, as she stood on the hearth-rug, with the hot blast of the stove striking through her like a pestilence. Once, she threw a glance wistfully toward the windows, and caught a glimpse, through its red curtains, of the snow-covered roofs, and the stars glimmering frostily, and all the delicious intensity of the cold night. The bleak wind rattled the window-panes, as if it were summoning her to come forth. But there stood the snow-child, drooping, before the hot stove!

But the common-sensible man saw nothing amiss.

"Come, wife," said he, "let her have a pair of thick stockings and a woollen shawl or blanket directly; and tell Dora to give her some warm supper as soon as the milk boils. You, Violet and Peony, amuse your little friend. She is out of spirits, you see, at finding herself in a strange place. For my part, I will go around among the neighbours, and find out where she belongs."

The mother, meanwhile, had gone in search of the shawl and stockings; for her own view of the matter, however subtle and delicate, had given way, as it always did, to the stubborn materialism of her husband. Without heeding the remonstrances of his two children, who still kept murmuring that their little snow-sister did not love the warmth, good Mr. Lindsey took his departure, shutting the parlour-door carefully behind him. Turning up the collar of his sack over his ears, he emerged from the house, and had barely reached the street-gate when he was recalled by the screams of Violet and Peony, and the rapping of a thimbled finger against the parlour window.

"Husband! husband!" cried his wife, showing her horror-stricken face through the window-panes. "There is no need of going for the child's parents!"

"We told you so, father!" screamed Violet and Peony, as

he re-entered the parlour. "You would bring her in; and now our poor—dear—beau-ti-ful little snow-sister is thawed!"

And their own sweet little faces were already dissolved in tears; so that their father, seeing what strange things occasionally happen in this every-day world, felt not a little anxious lest his children might be going to thaw too! In the utmost perplexity, he demanded an explanation of his wife. She could only reply, that, being summoned to the parlour by the cries of Violet and Peony, she found no trace of the little white maiden, unless it were the remains of a heap of snow, which, while she was gazing at it, melted quite away upon the hearth-rug.

"And there you see all that is left of it!" added she, pointing to a pool of water, in front of the stove.

"Yes, father," said Violet, looking reproachfully at him, through her tears, "there is all that is left of our dear little snow-sister!"

"Naughty father!" cried Peony, stamping his foot, and—I shudder to say—shaking his little fist at the common-sensible man. "We told you how it would be! What for did you bring her in?"

And the Heidenberg stove, through the isinglass of its door, seemed to glare at good Mr. Lindsey, like a red-eyed demon, triumphing in the mischief which it had done!

This, you will observe, was one of those rare cases, which yet will occasionally happen, where common-sense finds itself at fault. The remarkable story of the snow-image, though to that sagacious class of people to whom good Mr. Lindsey belongs it may seem but a childish affair, is, nevertheless, capable of being moralised in various methods, greatly for their edification. One of its lessons, for instance, might be that it behooves men, and especially men of

benevolence, to consider well what they are about, and, before acting on their philanthropic purposes, to be quite sure that they comprehend the nature and all the relations of the business in hand. What has been established as an element of good to one being may prove absolute mischief to another; even as the warmth of the parlour was proper enough for children of flesh and blood, like Violet and Peony —though by no means very wholesome, even for them— involved nothing short of annihilation to the unfortunate snow-image.

But, after all, there is no teaching anything to wise men of good Mr. Lindsey's stamp. They know everything—O, to be sure!—everything that has been, and everything that is, and everything that, by any future possibility, can be. And, should some phenomenon of nature or providence transcend their system, they will not recognise it, even if it come to pass under their very noses.

"Wife," said Mr. Lindsey, after a fit of silence, "see what a quantity of snow the children have brought in on their feet! It has made quite a puddle here before the stove. Pray tell Dora to bring some towels and sop it up!"

IV

UNDINE

I.—HOW THE KNIGHT CAME TO THE FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE

ONCE—it may be some hundreds of years ago—there lived a good old Fisherman, who, on a fine summer's evening, was sitting before the door mending his nets. He dwelt in a land of exceeding beauty. The green slope, upon which he had built his hut, stretched far out into a great lake; and it seemed either that the cape, enamoured of the glassy blue waters, had pressed forward into their bosom, or that the lake had lovingly folded in its arms the blooming promontory, with her waving grass and flowers, and the refreshing shade of her tall trees. Each bade the other welcome, and increased its own beauty by so doing. This lovely nook was scarcely ever visited by mankind, except by the Fisherman and his family. For behind the promonotory lay a very wild forest, which, beside being gloomy and pathless, had too bad a name as the resort of wondrous spirits and goblins, to be crossed by anyone who could help it. Yet the pious old Fisherman went through it without being molested, whenever he walked to a large city beyond the forest, to dispose of the costly fish that he caught in the lake. For him, indeed, there was little danger, even in that forest; for his thoughts were almost all thoughts of devotion, and his custom was to carol forth to Heaven a loud and heartfelt hymn, on first setting foot within the treacherous shades.

As he sat this evening most peacefully over his nets, he was

startled in an unwonted manner by a rustling sound in the forest, like that of a man and horse; and the noise came nearer and nearer. The dreams he had had in many a stormy night of the spirits of the forest started up before his mind, particularly the image of a gigantic long snow-white man, who kept nodding his head mysteriously. Nay, as he raised his eyes and looked into the forest, he could fancy he saw, through the thick screen of leaves, the nodding creature advance toward him. But he soon composed himself, recollecting that even in the heart of the woods nothing had ever befallen him; much less here, in the open air, could the bad spirits have power to touch him. He moreover repeated a text from the Bible aloud and earnestly, which quite restored his courage, and he almost laughed to see how his fancy had misled him. The white nodding man suddenly resolved himself into a little brook he knew of old, which gushed bubbling out of the wood, and emptied itself into the lake. And the rustling had been caused by a horseman in gorgeous attire, who now came forward toward the hut from beneath the trees.

He wore a scarlet mantle over his purple, gold-embroidered jerkin; a plume of red and purple feathers waved over his gold-coloured barret-cap; and from his golden belt hung a glittering jewelled sword. The white courser which carried him was of lighter make than the generality of chargers, and trod so airily, that the enamelled turf seemed scarcely to bend under him. The aged Fisherman could not quite shake off his uneasiness, although he told himself that so noble a guest could bring him no harm, and accordingly doffed his hat courteously, and interrupted his work when he approached.

The Knight reined in his horse, and asked whether they could both obtain one night's shelter.

"As to your horse, good sir," answered the Fisherman, "I have no better stable to offer him than the shady meadow, and

no provender but the grass which grows upon it. But you shall yourself be heartily welcome to my poor house, and to the best of my supper and night lodging."

The stranger seemed quite content; he dismounted, and they helped each other to take off the horse's girth and saddle, after which the Knight let him graze on the flowery pasture, saying to his host, "Even if I had found you less kind and hospitable, my good old man, you must have borne with me till to-morrow; for I see we are shut in by a wide lake and Heaven forbid that I should cross the haunted forest again at nightfall!"

"We will not say much about that," replied the Fisherman; and he led his guest into the cottage.

There, close by the hearth, from whence a scanty fire shed its glimmering light over the clean little room, sat the Fisherman's old wife. When their noble guest came in, she rose to give him a kind welcome, but immediately resumed her place of honour, without offering it to him; and the Fisherman said with a smile: "Do not take it amiss, young sir, if she does not give up to you the most comfortable place; it is the custom among us poor people that it should always belong to the oldest."

"Why, husband!" said his wife, quietly, "what are you thinking of? Our guest is surely a Christian gentleman, and how could it come into his kind young heart to turn old people out of their places? Sit down, my young lord," added she, turning to the Knight; "there stands a very comfortable chair for you; only remember it must not be too roughly handled, for one leg is not so steady as it has been." The Knight drew the chair carefully forward, seated himself sociably, and soon felt quite at home in this little household, and as if he had just returned to it from a far journey.

The three friends began to converse openly and familiarly

together. First the Knight asked a few questions about the forest, but the old man would not say much of that; least of all, said he, was it fitting to talk of such things at nightfall; but, on household concerns, and their own way of life, the old folks talked readily; and were pleased when the Knight told them of his travels, and that he had a castle near the source of the Danube, and that his name was Lord Huldbrand of Ringstetten. In the middle of their discourse, the stranger often observed a noise outside a small window, as if someone were dashing water against it. The old man knit his brows and looked grave whenever this occurred; at last, when a great splash of water came full against the panes, and some found its way into the room, he could bear it no longer, but started up, crying, "Undine! will you never leave off these childish tricks—when we have a stranger gentleman in the house too!" This produced silence outside, all but a sound of suppressed giggling, and the Fisherman said as he came back: "My honoured guest, you must put up with this, and perhaps with many another piece of mischief; but she means no harm. It is our adopted child Undine; there is no breaking her of her childish ways, though she is eighteen years old now. But as I told you she is as good a child as ever lived at bottom."

"Ay, so you may say!" rejoined his wife, shaking her head. "When you come home from fishing, or from a journey, her playful nonsense may be pleasant enough. But, to be keeping her out of mischief all day long, as I must do, and never get a word of sense from her, nor a bit of help and comfort in my old age, is enough to weary the patience of a saint."

"Well, well," said the good man, "you feel toward Undine as I do toward the lake. Though its waves are apt enough

to burst my banks and my nets, yet I love them for all that, and so do you love our pretty wench, with all her plaguey tricks. Don't you?"

"Why, one cannot be really angry with her, to be sure," said the dame, smiling.

Here the door flew open, and a beautiful fair creature tripped in, and said, playfully: "Well, father, you made game of me; where is your guest?" The next moment she perceived the Knight, and stood fixed in mute admiration; while Huldbrand gazed upon her lovely form, and tried to impress her image on his mind, thinking that he must avail himself of her amazement to do so, and that in a moment she would shrink away in a fit of bashfulness. But it proved otherwise. After looking at him a good while, she came up to him familiarly, knelt down beside him, and playing with a golden medal that hung from his rich chain, she said: "So, thou kind, thou beautiful guest! hast thou found us out in our poor hut at last? Why didst thou roam the world so many years without coming near us? Art come through the wild forest, my handsome friend?" The old woman allowed him no time to answer. She desired her to get up instantly, like a modest girl, and to set about her work. But Undine, without replying, fetched a footstool and put it close to Huldbrand's chair, sat down there with her spinning, and said cheerfully—"I will sit and work here." The old man behaved as parents are apt to do with spoiled children. He pretended not to see Undine's waywardness, and was beginning to talk of something else; but she would not let him. She said, "I asked our visitor where he came from, and he has not answered me yet."

"From the forest I came, you beautiful sprite," answered Huldbrand; and she continued:

"Then you must tell me how you came there, and what wonderful adventures you had in it, for I know that nobody can escape without some."

Huldbrand could not help shuddering on being reminded of his adventures, and involuntarily glanced at the window, half expecting to see one of the strange beings he had encountered in the forest grinning at him through it; but nothing was to be seen except the deep black night, which had now closed in. He recollected himself, and was just beginning his narrative, when the old man interposed: "Not just now, Sir Knight; this is no time for such tales."

But Undine jumped up passionately, put her beautiful arms akimbo, and standing before the Fisherman, exclaimed: "What! may not he tell his story, father—may not he? But I will have it; he must. He shall indeed!" And she stamped angrily with her pretty feet, but it was all done in so comical and graceful a manner, that Huldbrand thought her still more bewitching in her wrath, than in her playful mood.

Not so the old man; his long-restrained anger burst out uncontrolled. He scolded Undine smartly for her disobedience, and unmannerly conduct to the stranger, his wife chiming in.

Undine then said: "Very well, if you will be quarrelsome and not let me have my own way, you may sleep alone in your smoky old hut!" and she shot through the door like an arrow, and rushed into the dark night.

II.—HOW UNDINE FIRST CAME TO THE FISHERMAN

Huldbrand and the Fisherman sprang from their seats, and tried to catch the angry maiden; but before they could reach the house door, Undine had vanished far into the

thick shades, and not a sound of her light footsteps was to be heard, by which to track her course. Huldbrand looked doubtfully at his host; he almost thought that the whole fair vision which had so suddenly plunged into the night, must be a continuation of the phantom play which had whirled around him in his passage through the forest. But the old man mumbled through his teeth: "It is not the first time she has served us so. And here are we, left in our anxiety with a sleepless night before us; for who can tell what harm may befall her, all alone out-of-doors till daybreak?"

"Then let us be after her, good father, for God's sake!" cried Huldbrand eagerly.

The old man replied, "Where would be the use? It were a sin to let you set off alone in pursuit of the foolish girl, and my old legs would never overtake such a Will-with-the-wisp—even if we could guess which way she is gone."

"At least let us call her, and beg her to come back," said Huldbrand; and he began calling after her in most moving tones: "Undine! O Undine, do return!"

The old man shook his head, and said that all the shouting in the world would do no good with such a wilful little thing. But yet he could not himself help calling out from time to time in the darkness: "Undine! ah, sweet Undine! I entreat thee, come back this once."

The Fisherman's words proved true. Nothing was to be seen or heard of Undine; and as her foster-father would by no means suffer Huldbrand to pursue her, they had nothing for it but to go in again. They found the fire on the hearth nearly burnt out, and the dame, who did not take to heart Undine's flight and danger so much as her husband, was gone to bed. The old man blew the coals, laid on dry wood, and by the light of the reviving flames

he found a flagon of wine, which he put between himself and his guest. "You are uneasy about that silly wench, Sir Knight," said he, "and we had better kill part of the night chatting and drinking, than toss about in our beds, trying to sleep in vain. Had not we?"

Huldbrand agreed; the Fisherman made him sit in his wife's empty arm-chair, and they both drank and talked together, as a couple of worthy friends should do. Whenever, indeed, there was the least stir outside the window, or even sometimes without any, one of them would look up and say, "There she comes." Then they would keep silence for a few moments, and as nothing came, resume their conversation, with a shake of the head and a sigh.

But as neither could think of much beside Undine, the best means they could devise for beguiling the time was, that the Fisherman should relate, and the Knight listen to, the history of her first coming to the cottage. He began as follows:

"One day, some fifteen years ago, I was carrying my fish through that dreary wood to the town. My wife stayed at home, as usual; and at that time she had a good and pretty reason for it—the Lord had bestowed upon us (old as we already were) a lovely babe. It was a girl; and so anxious were we to do our best for the little treasure, that we began to talk of leaving our beautiful home, in order to give our darling a good education among other human beings. With us poor folks, wishing is one thing, and doing is quite another, Sir Knight; but what then? we can only try our best. Well then, as I plodded on, I turned over the scheme in my head. I was loath to leave our own dear nook, and it made me shudder to think, in the din and brawls of the town, So it is here we shall soon live, or

in some place nearly as bad! Yet I never murmured against our good God, but rather thanked Him in secret for His last blessing; nor can I say that I met with anything extraordinary in the forest, either coming or going; indeed nothing to frighten me has ever crossed my path. The Lord was ever with me in the awful shades."

Here he uncovered his bald head, and sat for a time in silent prayer; then putting his cap on again, he continued: "On this side of the wood it was—on this side, that the sad news met me. My wife came toward me with eyes streaming like two fountains; she was in deep mourning. 'Oh, good Heaven!' I called out, 'where is our dear child? Tell me?'

" 'Gone, dear husband,' she replied; and we went into our cottage together, weeping silently. I looked for the little corpse, and then first heard how it had happened. My wife had been sitting on the shore with the child, and playing with it, all peace and happiness; when the babe all at once leaned over, as if she saw something most beautiful in the water; there she sat smiling, sweet angel! and stretching out her little hands; but the next moment she darted suddenly out of her arms, and down into the smooth waters. I made much search for the poor little corpse; but in vain; not a trace of her could I find.

"When evening was come, we childless parents were sitting together in the hut, silent; neither of us had a mind to speak, even if the tears had let us. We were looking idly into the fire. Just then something made a noise at the door. It opened, and a beautiful little maid, of three or four years' old stood there gaily dressed, and smiling in our faces. We were struck dumb with surprise, and at first hardly knew if she were a little human being, or only an empty shadow. But I soon saw that her golden hair

and gay clothes were dripping wet, and it struck me the little fairy must have been in the water and distressed for help. 'Wife,' said I, 'our dear child had no friend to save her; shall we not do for others what would have made our remaining days so happy, if anyone had done it for us?' We undressed the child, put her to bed, and gave her a warm drink, while she never said a word, but kept smiling at us with her sky-blue eyes.

"The next morning we found she had done herself no harm; and I asked her who were her parents, and what had brought here here; but she gave me a strange, confused answer. I am sure she must have been born far away, for these fifteen years have we kept her, without ever finding out where she came from; and besides, she is apt to let drop such marvellous things in her talk, that you might think she had lived in the moon. She will speak of golden castles, of crystal roofs, and I can't tell what beside. The only thing she has told us clearly, is, that as she was sailing on the lake with her mother, she fell into the water, and when she recovered her senses found herself lying under these trees, in safety and comfort, upon our pretty shore.

"So now we had a serious, anxious charge thrown upon upon us. To keep and bring up the foundling, instead of our poor drowned child—that was soon resolved upon but who should tell us if she had yet been baptised or no? She knew how not how to answer the question. That she was one of God's creatures, made for His glory and service, that much she knew; and anything that would glorify and please Him, she was willing to have done. So my wife and I said to each other: 'If she has never been baptised, there is no doubt it should be done; and if she was, better do too much than too little, in a matter of such consequence.' We therefore began to seek a good name for the child.

Dorothea seemed to us the best; for I had once heard that meant God's gift; and she had indeed been sent us by Him as a special blessing, to comfort us in our misery. But she would not hear of that name. She said Undine was what her parents used to call her, and Undine she would still be. That, I thought, sounded like a heathen name, and occurred in no Calendar; and I took counsel with a priest in the town about it. He also objected to the name Undine; and at my earnest request, came home with me, through the dark forest, in order to baptise her. The little creature stood before us, looking so gay and charming in her holiday clothes, that the priest's heart warmed toward her; and what with coaxing and wilfulness, she got the better of him, so that he clean forgot all the objections he had thought of to the name Undine. She was therefore so christened and behaved particularly well and decently during the sacred rite, wild and unruly as she had always been before. For, what my wife said just now was too true—we have indeed found her the wildest little fairy! If I were to tell you all——"

Here the Knight interrupted the Fisherman, to call his attention to a sound of roaring waters, which he had noticed already in the pauses of the old man's speech, and which now rose in fury as it rushed past the windows. They both ran to the door. By the light of the newly risen moon, they saw the brook which gushed out of the forest breaking wildly over its banks, and whirling along stones and branches in its eddying course. A storm, as if awakened by the uproar, burst from the heavy clouds that were chasing each other across the moon; the lake howled under the wings of the wind; the trees on the shore groaned from top to bottom, and bowed themselves over the rushing waters. "Undine! for God's sake, Undine!" cried the Knight, and

the old man. No answer was to be heard; and, heedless now of any danger to themselves, they ran off in different directions, calling her in frantic anxiety.

III.—HOW THEY FOUND UNDINE AGAIN

The longer Huldbrand wandered in vain pursuit of Undine, the more bewildered he became. The idea that she might be a mere spirit of the woods, sometimes returned upon him with double force; nay, amid the howling waves and storm, the groaning of trees, and the wild commotion of the once-peaceful spot, he might have fancied the whole promontory, its hut and its inhabitants, to be a delusion of magic, but that he still heard in the distance the Fisherman's piteous cries of "Undine!" and the old housewife's loud prayers and hymns, above the whistling of the blast.

At last he found himself on the margin of the overflowing stream, and saw it by the moonlight rushing violently along, close to the edge of the mysterious forest so as to make an island of the peninsula on which he stood. "Gracious Heaven!" thought he, "Undine may have ventured a step or two into that awful forest—perhaps in her pretty waywardness, just because I would not tell her my story—and the swollen stream has cut her off, and left her weeping alone among the spectres!" A cry of terror escaped him, and he clambered down the bank by means of some stones and fallen trees, hoping to wade or swim across the flood, and seek the fugitive beyond it. Fearful and unearthly visions did indeed float before him, like those he had met with in the morning, beneath these groaning, tossing branches. Especially he was haunted by the appearance of a tall white man, whom he remembered but too well, grinning and nodding at him from the opposite bank;

however, the thought of these grim monsters did but urge him onward as he recollected Undine, now perhaps in deadly fear among them, and alone.

He had laid hold of a stout pine branch, and leaning on it, was standing in the eddy, though scarcely able to stem it, but he stepped boldly forward—when a sweet voice exclaimed close behind him: "Trust him not—trust not! The old fellow is tricksy—the stream!"

Well he knew those silver tones: the moon was just disappearing behind a cloud, and he stood amid the deepening shades, made dizzy as the water shot by him with the speed of an arrow. Yet he would not desist. "And if thou art not truly there, if thou flittest before me an empty shadow, I care not to live; I will melt into air like thee, my beloved Undine!" This he cried aloud, and strode further into the flood.

"Look round then—look round, fair youth!" he heard just behind him, and looking round, he beheld by the returning moonbeams, on a fair island left by the flood, under some thickly interlaced branches, Undine all smiles and loveliness, nestling in the flowery grass. How much more joyfully than before did the young man use his pine staff to cross the waters! A few strides brought him through the flood that had parted them; and he found himself at her side, on the nook of soft grass, securely sheltered under the shade of the old trees. Undine half arose, and twined her arms round his neck in the green arbour, making him sit down by her on the turf. "Here you shall tell me all, my own friend," said she in a low whisper; "the cross old folks cannot overhear us. And our pretty bower of leaves is well worth their wretched hut."

"This is heaven!" cried Huldbrand, as he clasped in his arms the beautiful flatterer.

Meantime the old man had reached the banks of the stream, and he called out: "So, Sir Knight, when I had made you welcome, as one honest man should another, here are you making love to my adopted child—to say nothing of your leaving me to seek her, alone and terrified, all night."

"I have but this moment found her, old man!" cried the Knight in reply.

"Well, I am glad of that," said the Fisherman; "now then bring her back to me at once."

But Undine would not hear of it. She had rather she said, go quite away into the wild woods with the handsome stranger, than return to the hut, where she had never had her own way, and which the Knight must sooner or later leave. Embracing Huldbrand, she sang with peculiar charm and grace:

"From misty cave the mountain wave
Leapt out and sought the main!
The Ocean's foam she made her home,
And ne'er returned again."

The old man wept bitterly as she sang, but this did not seem to move her. She continued to caress her lover, till at length he said: "Undine, the poor old man's grief goes to my heart if not to yours. Let us go back to him."

Astonished, she raised her large blue eyes toward him, and after a pause answered slowly and reluctantly: "To please you, I will: whatever you like pleases me too. But the old man yonder must first promise me that he will let you tell me all you saw in the forest, and the rest we shall see about."

"Only come back—do come!" cried the Fisherman, and not another word could he say. At the same moment he stretched his arms over the stream toward her, and nodded

his head by way of giving her the desired promise; and as his white hair fell over his face, it gave him a strange look, and reminded Huldbrand involuntarily of the nodding white man in the woods. Determined, however, that nothing should stop him, the young Knight took the fair damsel in his arms, and carried her through the short space of foaming flood, which divided the island from the mainland. The old man fell upon Undine's neck, and rejoiced, and kissed her in the fulness of his heart; his aged wife also came up, and welcomed their recovered child most warmly. All reproaches were forgotten; the more so, as Undine seemed to have left her sauciness behind, and overwhelmed her foster parents with kind words and caresses.

When these transports of joy had subsided, and they began to look about them, the rosy dawn was just shedding its glow over the lake, the storm had ceased, and the birds were singing merrily on the wet branches. As Undine insisted upon hearing the story of the Knight's adventure, both the old folks cheerfully indulged her. Breakfast was set out under the trees between the cottage and the lake, and they sat down before it with glad hearts, Undine placing herself resolutely on the grass at the Knight's feet. Huldbrand began his narrative as follows.

IV.—OF WHAT HAD BEFALLEN THE KNIGHT IN THE FOREST

"About eight days ago, I rode into the imperial city beyond this forest. A grand tournament and tilting was held there, and I spared neither lance nor steed. As I stood still a moment to rest myself, in a pause of the noble game, and had just given my helmet in charge to a squire, my eye fell upon a most beautiful woman, who stood, richly adorned, in one of the galleries, looking on. I inquired her name,

and found that this charming lady was Bertalda, the adopted daughter of one of the principal lords in the neighbourhood. I observed that her eye was upon me too, and as is the way with us young knights, I had not been slack before, but I now fought more bravely still. That evening I was Bertalda's partner in the dance, and so I was again every evening during the jousting."

Here a sudden pain in his left hand, which hung beside him, checked the Knight in his tale, and he looked at his hand. Undine's pearly teeth had bitten one of his fingers sharply, and she looked very black at him. But the next moment that look changed into an expression of tender sadness, and she whispered low: "So you are faithless too!" Then she hid her face in her hands, and the Knight proceeded with his tale, although staggered and perplexed.

"That Bertalda is a high-spirited, extraordinary maid. On the second day she charmed me far less than the first, and on the third, less still. But I remained with her, because she was more gracious to me than to any other knight, and so it fell out that I asked her in jest for one of her gloves. 'You shall have it,' said she, 'if you will visit the haunted forest alone, and bring me an account of it.' It was not that I cared much for her glove, but the words had been spoken, and a knight that loves his fame does not wait to be twice urged to such a feat."

"I thought she had loved you," interrupted Undine.

"It looked like it," he replied.

"Well," cried the maiden, laughing, "she must be a fool indeed! To drive *him* away whom she loves! and into a haunted forest besides! The forest and its mysteries might have waited long enough, for me."

"I set out yesterday morning," continued the Knight, smiling kindly at Undine. "The stems of the trees looked

so bright in the morning sunshine, as it played upon the green turf, and the leaves whispered together so pleasantly, that I could not but laugh at those who imagined any evil to lurk in such a beautiful place. I shall very soon have ridden through it and back again, thought I, pushing on cheerily, and before I was aware of it, I found myself in the depths of its leafy shades, and the plains behind me far out of sight. It then occurred to me that I was likely enough to lose my way in this wilderness of trees, and that this might be the only real danger to which the traveller was here exposed. So I halted, and took notice of the course of the sun; it was now high in the heavens.

"On looking up, I saw something black among the boughs of a tall oak. I took it for a bear, and seized my rifle; but it addressed me in a human voice, most hoarse and grating, saying: 'If I did not break off the twigs up here, what should we do to-night for fuel to roast you with, Sir Simpleton?' And he gnashed his teeth, and rattled the boughs, so as to startle my horse, which ran away with me before I could make out what kind of a devil it was."

"You should not mention *his* name," said the Fisherman, crossing himself; his wife silently did the same, while Undine turned her beaming eyes upon her lover, and said--

"He is safe now; it is well they did not really roast him. Go on, pretty youth."

He continued: "My terrified horse had almost dashed me against many a trunk and branch; he was running down with fright and heat, and yet there was no stopping him. At length he rushed madly toward the brink of a stony precipice; but here, as it seemed to me, a tall white man threw himself across the plunging animal's path, and made him start back, and stop. I then recovered the control of him, and found that, instead of a white man,

my preserver was no other than a bright silvery brook, which gushed down from the hill beside me, checking and crossing my horse in his course."

"Thanks, dear brook!" cried Undine, clapping her hands. But the old man shook his head, and seemed lost in thought.

"Scarcely had I settled myself in the saddle, and got firm hold of my reins again," proceeded Huldbrand, "when an extraordinary little man sprang up beside me, wizen and hideous beyond measure; he was of a yellow-brown hue, and his nose almost as big as the whole of his body. He grinned at me in the most fulsome way with his wide mouth, bowing and scraping every moment. As I could not abide these antics, I thanked him abruptly, pulled my still-trembling horse another way, and thought I would seek some other adventure, or perhaps go home; for during my wild gallop the sun had passed his meridian, and was now declining westward. But the little imp sprang round like lightning, and stood in front of my horse again.

" 'Make way!' cried I impatiently, 'the animal is unruly, and may run over you.' "

" 'Oh,' snarled the imp, with a laugh more disgusting than before, 'first give me a piece of coin for having caught your horse so nicely; but for me, you and your pretty beast would be lying in the pit down yonder: whew!'

" 'Only have done with your grimaces,' said I, 'and take your money along with you, though it is all a lie: look there, it was that honest brook that saved me, not you—you pitiful wretch!' So saying, I dropped a gold coin into his comical cap, which he held out toward me like a beggar.

"I trotted on, but he still followed, screaming, and, with inconceivable rapidity, whisked up to my side. I put my horse into a gallop; he kept pace with me, though with much difficulty, and twisted his body into various frightful

and ridiculous attitudes, crying at each step as he held up the money: 'Bad coin! bad gold! bad gold! bad coin!' And this he shrieked in such a ghastly tone, that you would have expected him to drop down dead after each cry.

"At last I stopped, much vexed, and asked, 'What do you want, with your shrieks? Take another gold coin; take two if you will, only let me alone.'

"He began his odious smirking again, and snarled, 'It's not gold, it's not gold that I want, young gentleman; I have rather more of that than I can use: you shall see.'

"All at once the surface of the ground became transparent; it looked like a smooth globe of green glass, and within it I saw a crowd of goblins at play with silver and gold. Tumbling about, head over heels they pelted each other in sport, making a toy of the precious metals, and powdering their faces with gold dust. My ugly companion stood half above, half below the surface; he made the others reach up to him quantities of gold, and showed it to me laughing, and then flung it into the fathomless depths beneath. He displayed the piece of gold I had given him to the goblins below, who held their sides with laughing, and hissed at me in scorn. At length all their bony fingers pointed at me together; and louder and louder, closer and closer, wilder and wilder grew the turmoil, as it rose toward me, till not my horse only, but I myself was terrified; I put spurs into him, and cannot tell how long I may have scoured the forest this time.

"When at last I halted, the shades of evening had closed in. Through the branches I saw a white footpath gleaming and hoped it must be a road out of the forest to the town. I resolved to work my way thither; but lo! an indistinct, dead-white face, with ever-changing features, peeped at me through the leaves; I tried to avoid it, but wherever I

went, there it was. Provoked, I attempted to push my horse against it; then it splashed us both over with white foam, and we turned away, blinded for the moment. So it drove us, step by step, further and further from the foot-path, and indeed never letting us go on undisturbed but in one direction. While we kept to this, it was close upon our heels, but did not thwart us. Having looked round once or twice, I observed that the white foaming head was placed on a gigantic body, equally white. I sometimes doubted my first impression, and thought it merely a water-fall, but I never could satisfy myself that it was so. Wearily did my horse and I precede this active white pursuer, who often nodded at us, as if saying, 'That's right! that's right!' and it ended by our issuing from the wood here, where I rejoiced to see your lawn, the lake, and this cottage, and where the long white man vanished."

"Thank Heaven, he is gone," said the old man, and he then proceeded to consider how his guest could best return to his friends in the city. Upon this, Undine was heard to laugh in a whisper.

Huldbrand observed it, and said: "I thought you had wished me to stay; and now you seem pleased when we talk of my going?"

"Because," replied Undine, "you cannot get away. Only try to cross the swollen brook, in a boat, on horseback, or on foot. Or rather, do not try, for you would be dashed to pieces by the branches and stones that it hurls along. And as to the lake, I know how that is: father never ventures across it in his boat."

Huldbrand laughed, and got up to see whether she had spoken true; the old man went with him, and the maiden tripped along playfully by their side. They found she had told them no worse than the truth and the Knight resigned

himself to staying in the island, as it might now be called, till the floods had subsided. As they returned homeward, he whispered in his pretty companion's ear—"Well, my little Undine! are you angry at my staying?"

"Ah," said she, sullenly, "never mind. If I had not bitten you, who knows what might have come out in your story of Bertalda?"

V.—OF THE LIFE WHICH THE KNIGHT LED ON THE ISLAND

Has it ever befallen thee, gentle reader, after many ups and downs in this troublesome world, to alight upon a spot where thou foundest rest; where the love which is born with us for fireside comfort and domestic peace, revived in thee; where thou couldst fancy thy early home with the blossoms of childhood, its pure, heartfelt affection, and the holy influence breathed from thy fathers' graves, to be restored to thee—and that it must indeed be "good for thee to be here, and to build tabernacles?" The charm may have been broken, the dream dispelled; but that has nothing to do with our present picture; nor wilt thou care to dwell on such bitter moments; but recall to mind that period of unspeakable peace, that foretaste of angelic rest which was granted thee, and thou wilt partly conceive what the Knight Huldbrand felt, while he lived on the promontory. Often, with secret satisfaction, did he mark the forest stream rolling by more wildly every day; its bed became wider and wider, and he felt the period of his seclusion from the world must be still prolonged. Having found an old cross-bow in a corner of the cottage, and mended it, he spent part of his days roving about, waylaying the birds that flew by, and bringing whatever he killed to the kitchen, as rare game. When he came back laden with spoil, Undine

would often scold him for taking the life of the dear little joyous creatures, soaring in the blue depths of Heaven; she would even weep bitterly over the dead birds. But if he came home empty-handed, she found fault with his awkwardness and laziness, which obliged them to be content with fish and crabs for dinner. Either way, he took delight in her pretty fits of anger; the more so as she rarely failed to make up for them by the fondest caresses afterwards. The old folks, having been in the young people's confidence from the first, unconsciously looked upon them as a betrothed or even married pair, shut out from the world with them in this retreat, and bestowed upon them for comforts in their old age. And this very seclusion helped to make the young Knight feel as if he were already Undine's bridegroom. It seemed to him that the whole world was contained within the surrounding waters, or at any rate, that he could never more cross that charmed boundary, and rejoin other human beings. And if at times the neighing of his steed reminded him of former feats of chivalry, and seemed to ask for more; if his coat of arms, embroidered on the saddle and trappings, caught his eye; or if his good sword fell from the nail on which he had hung it and slipped out of its scabbard, he would silence the misgivings that arose, by thinking, Undine is not a fisherman's daughter, but most likely sprung from some highly noble family in distant lands. The only thing that ever ruffled him, was to hear the old woman scolding Undine. The wayward girl only laughed at her; but to him it seemed as if his own honour were touched; and yet he could not blame the good wife, for Undine mostly deserved ten times worse than she got, therefore he still felt kindly toward the old dame, and these little rubs scarcely disturbed the even current of their lives.

At length, however, a grievance did arise. The Knight

and the Fisherman were in the habit of sitting cheerfully over a flask of wine, both at noon, and also at eventide while the wind whistled around, as it generally did at night. But they had now exhausted the whole stock which the Fisherman had, long since, brought from the town with him, and they both missed it sadly. Undine laughed at them all day for it, but they could not join in her mirth as heartily as usual. Toward evening she left the cottage, saying she could no longer bear such long dismal faces. As the twilight looked stormy, and the waters were beginning to moan and heave, the Knight and the old man ran out anxiously to fetch her back, remembering the agony of that night when Huldbrand first came to the cottage. But they were met by Undine, clapping her hands merrily. "What will you give me if I get you some wine? But, indeed, I want no reward for it," she added; "I shall be satisfied if you will but look brighter, and find more to say than you have done all these tedious mornings. Come along; the floods have washed a barrel ashore, and I will engage to sleep a whole week through if it is not a barrel of wine!"

The men both followed her to a shady creek, and there found a barrel, which did look as if it contained the generous liquor which they longed for. They rolled it toward the hut as fast as they could, for a heavy storm seemed stalking across the sky, and there was light enough left to show them the waves of the lake tossing up their foaming heads, as if looking out for the rain which would soon pour down upon them. Undine lent a hand in the work, and presently, when the shower threatened to break instantly over their heads, she spoke to the big clouds in playful defiance: "You, you there! mind you do not give us a drenching; we are some way from home yet." The old man admonished her that this was sinful presumption, but she laughed slyly to her-

self, and no harm came of it. Beyond their hopes, they all three reached the comfortable fireside with their prize, unhurt; and it was not till they had opened the barrel, and found it to contain excellent wine, that the rain broke from the heavy clouds in torrents, and they heard the storm roaring among the trees, and over the lake's heaving billows.

A few bottles were soon filled from the great barrel, enough to last them several days; and they sat sipping and chatting over the bright fire, secure from the raging tempest. But the old man's heart presently smote him. "Dear me," said he, "here are we making merry over the blessing of Providence, while the owner of it has perhaps been carried away by the flood, and lost his life!"—"No, that he has not," said Undine, smiling; and she filled the Knight's glass again. He replied, "I give you my word, good father, that if I knew how to find and save him, no danger should deter me; I would not shrink from setting out in this darkness. This much I promise you, if ever I set foot in an inhabited country again, I will make inquiry after him or his heirs, and restore to them twice or three times the value of the wine." This pleased the old man; he gave an approving nod to the Knight, and drained his glass with a better conscience and a lighter heart. But Undine said to Huldbrand, "Do as you like with your money, you may make what compensation you please; but as to setting out and wandering after him, that was hastily said. I should cry my heart out if we chanced to lose you; and had not you rather stay with me and with the good wine?" "Why, yes!" said Huldbrand, laughing. "Well then," rejoined Undine, "it was a foolish thing you talked of doing; charity begins at home, you know." The old woman turned away, shaking her head and sighing; her husband forgot his usual indulgence for the pretty lassie, and reproved

her sharply. "One would think," said he, "you had been reared by Turks and heathens; God forgive you and us, you perverse child."—"Ay but it *is* my way of thinking," pursued Undine, "whoever has reared me, so what is the use of your talking?"—"Peace!" cried the Fisherman; and she, who with all her wildness was sometimes cowed in a moment, clung trembling to Huldbrand, and whispered, "And are you angry with me, dear friend?" The Knight pressed her soft hand, and stroked down her ringlets. Not a word could he say; his distress at the old man's harshness toward Undine had sealed his lips; and so each couple remained sitting opposite the other, in moody silence and constraint.

VI.—OF A BRIDAL

A gentle tap at the door broke the silence, and made them all start: it sometimes happens that a mere trifle, coming quite unexpectedly, strikes the senses with terror. They looked at each other hesitating; the tap was repeated, accompanied by a deep groan, and the Knight grasped his sword. But the old man muttered, "If it is what I fear, it is not a sword that will help us!" Undine, however, stepped forward to the door, and said boldly and sharply, "If you are after any mischief, you spirits of earth, Kühleborn shall teach you manners."

The terror of the others increased at these strange words; they looked at the maiden with awe, and Huldbrand was just mustering courage to ask her a question, when a voice answered her from without: "I am no spirit of earth; call me, if you will, a spirit pent in mortal clay. If you fear God, and will be charitable, you dwellers in the cottage, open the door to me." Undine opened it before he had

done speaking, and held out a lamp into the stormy night, so as to show them the figure of an aged Priest, who started back as the radiant beauty of Undine flashed upon his sight. Well might he suspect magic and witchery, when so bright a vision shone out of a mean-looking cottage; he accordingly began a canticle, "All good spirits give praise to the Lord!"

"I am no ghost," said Undine, smiling; "am I so frightful to behold? And you may see that a pious saying has no terrors for me. I worship God, too, and praise Him after my own fashion; He has not created us all alike. Come in, venerable father; you will find worthy folks here."

The holy man walked in, bowing and casting his eyes around, and looking most mild and venerable. Every fold of his dark garment was dripping with water, and so were his long white beard and hoary locks. The Fisherman and the Knight led him to a bedroom, and gave him change of clothing, while the women dried his wet garments by the hearth fire. The aged stranger thanked them with all humility and gentleness, but would by no means accept of the Knight's splendid mantle, which he offered him; he chose himself an old gray wrapper of the Fisherman's instead. So they returned to the kitchen; the dame up gave her own arm-chair to the Priest, and had no peace till he sat himself down on it: "For," said she, "you are old and weary, and a priest besides." Undine pushed her little footstool toward the good man's feet, and altogether behaved to him quite properly and gracefully. Huldbrand took notice of this, in a playful whisper; but she answered very gravely: "Because he is a servant of the Maker of us all; that is too serious for a jest."

Meantime the two men set meat and wine before their guest, and when he had recruited his strength a little, he began his story; saying that the day before he had left his

monastery, which was a good way off beyond the lake, intending to visit the bishop at his palace, and report to him the distress which these almost supernatural floods had caused the monks and their poor tenantry. After going round a long way, to avoid these floods, he had been obliged toward evening to cross an arm of the overflowing lake, with the help of two honest sailors. "But," added he, "no sooner had our little vessel touched the waves, than we were wrapped in the tremendous storm, which is still raging over our heads now. It looked as if the waters had only awaited our coming to give a loose to their fury. The oars were soon dashed from the seamen's hands, and we saw their broken fragments carried further and further from us by the waves. We floated on the wave tops, helpless, driven by the furious tempest toward your shores, which we saw in the distance whenever the clouds parted for a moment. The boat was tossed about still more wildly and giddily; and whether it upset, or I fell out, I cannot tell. I floated on, till a wave landed me at the foot of a tree, in this your island."

"Ay, island indeed!" said the Fisherman. "It was a promontory but a short time ago. But, since the stream and our lake are gone raving mad together, everything about us is new and strange."

The Priest continued: "As I crept along the water-side in the dark, with a wild uproar around me, something caught my eye, and presently I descried a beaten pathway, which was soon lost in the shades; I spied the light in your cottage, and ventured to come hither; and I cannot sufficiently thank my heavenly Father, who has not only delivered me from the waters, but guided me to such kind souls. I feel this blessing the more, as it is very likely I may never see any faces but yours again."—"How so?" asked the

Fisherman. "Can you guess how long this fury of the elements may last?" replied the Priest. "And I am an old man. My stream of life may perhaps lose itself in the earth, before these floods subside. And besides, it may be the foaming waters will divide you from the forest more and more, till you are unable to get across in your fishing boat; and the people of the mainland, full of their own concerns, would quite forget you in your retreat."

Shuddering, and crossing herself, the Fisherman's wife exclaimed, "God forbid!" But the old man smiled at her, and said, "What creatures we are. That would make no difference, to you at least, my dear wife. How many years is it since you have set foot within the forest? And have you seen any face but Undine's and mine? Lately, indeed, we have had the good Knight and Priest besides. But they would stay with us; so that if we are forgotten in this island, you will be the gainer."

"So I see," said the dame; "yet somehow, it is cheerless to feel ourselves quite cut off from the rest of the world, however seldom we had seen it before."

"Then *you* will stay with us!" murmured Undine in a sweet voice, and she pressed closer to Huldbrand's side. But he was lost in deep thought. Since the Priest had last spoken, the land beyond the wild stream had seemed to his fancy more dark and distant than ever; while the flowery island he lived in—and his bride, the fairest flower in the picture—bloomed and smiled more and more freshly in his imagination. Here was the Priest at hand to unite them;—and, to complete his resolution, the old dame just then darted a reproving look at Undine, for clinging to her lover's side in the holy man's presence; an angry lecture seemed on the point of beginning. He turned toward the Priest, and these words burst from him: "You see before

you a betrothed pair, reverend sir; if this damsel and the kind old people will consent, you shall unite us this very evening."

The old folks were much surprised. Such a thought had often crossed their minds, but they had never till this moment heard it uttered; and it now fell upon their ears like an unexpected thing. Undine had suddenly become quite grave, and sat musing deeply, while the Priest inquired into various circumstances, and asked the old couple's consent to the deed. After some deliberation, they gave it; the dame went away to prepare the young people's bridal chamber, and to fetch from her stores two consecrated tapers for the wedding ceremony. Meanwhile the Knight was pulling two rings off his gold chain for himself and his bride to exchange. But this roused Undine from her reverie, and she said: "Stay! my parents did not send me into the world quite penniless; they looked forward long ago to this occasion and provided for it." She quickly withdrew, and returned bringing two costly rings, one of which she gave to her betrothed and kept the other herself. This astonished the old Fisherman, and still more his wife, who came in soon after; for they neither of them had ever seen these jewels about the child. "My parents," said Undine, "had these rings sewed into the gay dress which I wore, when first I came to you. They charged me to let no one know of them till my wedding-day came. Therefore I took them secretly out of the dress, and have kept them hidden till this evening."

Here the Priest put a stop to the conversation, by lighting the holy tapers, placing them on the table, and calling the young pair to him. With few and solemn words he joined their hands; the aged couple gave their blessing, while the bride leaned upon her husband, pensive and trembling.

When it was over, the Priest said: "You are strange

people after all! What did you mean by saying you were the only inhabitants of this island? During the whole ceremony there was a fine-looking tall man, in a white cloak, standing just outside the window opposite me. He must be near the door still, if you like to invite him in."—"Heaven forbid!" said the dame shuddering; the old man shook his head without speaking; and Huldbrand rushed to the window. He could fancy he saw a streak of white, but it was soon lost in darkness. So he assured the Priest he must have been mistaken; and they all sat down comfortably round the fire.

VII.—HOW THE REST OF THE EVENING PASSED AWAY

Undine had been perfectly quiet and well-behaved both before and during the marriage ceremony; but now her wild spirits seemed the more uncontrollable from the restraint they had undergone, and rose to an extravagant height. She played all manner of childish tricks on her husband, her foster parents, and even the venerable Priest, and when the old woman began to check her, one or two words from Huldbrand, who gravely called Undine "his wife," reduced her to silence. The Knight himself, however, was far from being pleased at Undine's childishness; but no hint or sign would stop her. Whenever she perceived his disapproving looks—which she occasionally did—it subdued her for the moment; she would sit down by him, whisper something playfully in his ear, and so dispel the frown as it gathered on his brow. But the next instant some wild nonsense would dart into her head, and set her off worse than ever. At last the Priest said to her, in a kind but grave manner, "My dear young lady, no one that beholds you can be severe upon you, it is true; but remember, it is your duty to keep watch over your soul, that it may be ever in harmony

with that of your wedded husband." "Soul!" cried Undine, laughing; "that sounds very fine, and for most people may be very edifying and moral advice. But if one has no soul at all, pray how is one to keep watch over it? And that is my case." The Priest was deeply hurt, and turned away his face in mingled sorrow and anger. But she came up to him beseechingly, and said, "Nay, hear me before you are angry, for it grieves me to see you displeased, and you would not distress any creature who has done you no harm. Only have patience with me, and I will tell you all, from the beginning."

They saw she was preparing to give them a regular history; but she stopped short, appearing thrilled by some secret recollection, and burst into a flood of gentle tears. They were quite at a loss what to think of her, and gazed upon her, distressed from various causes. At length drying her eyes, she looked at the Priest earnestly and said, "There must be much to love in a soul, but much that is awful too. For God's sake, holy father, tell me—were it not better to be still without one?" She waited breathlessly for an answer, restraining her tears. Her hearers had all risen from their seats, and now stepped back from her, shuddering. She seemed to have no eyes but for the saintly man; her countenance assumed an expression of anxiety and awe which yet more alarmed the others. "Heavy must be the burden of a soul," added she, as no one answered her —"heavy indeed! for the mere approach of mine overshadows me with anxious melancholy. And ah! how light-hearted, how joyous I used to be!" A fresh burst of weeping overcame her, and she covered her face with her veil.

The Priest then approached her with much gravity, and adjured her by the holiest names to confess the truth, if any evil lurked in her, unknown to them. But she fell on

her knees before him, repeated after him all his words of piety, gave praise to God, and declared she was in charity with all the world. The Priest turned to the young Knight. "Sir bridegroom," said he, "I leave you alone with her whom I have made your wife. As far as I can discover, there is no evil, although much that is mysterious, in her. I exhort you to be sober, loving, and faithful." So he went out; and the old people followed, crossing themselves.

Undine was still on her knees; she uncovered her face and looked timidly at Huldbrand, saying, "Ah, thou wilt surely cast me off now; and yet I have done nothing wrong, poor, poor child that I am!" This she said with so touching and gentle an expression, that her husband forgot all the gloom and mystery that had chilled his heart; he hastened toward, her and raised her in his arms. She smiled through her tears—it was like the glow of dawn shining upon a clear fountain. "Thou canst not forsake me!" whispered she, in accents of the firmest reliance; and she stroked his cheeks with her soft little hands. He tried to shake off the gloomy thoughts which still lurked in a corner of his mind, suggesting to him that he had married a fairy, or some shadowy being from the world of spirits: one question, however, he could not help asking: "My dear little Undine, just tell me one thing: what was that you said about spirits of earth, and Kühleborn, when the Priest knocked at the door?"—"All nonsense!" said Undine, laughing, with her usual gayety. "First I frightened you with it, and then you frightened me. And that is the end of the story, and of our wedding-day!"

VIII.—THE DAY AFTER THE MARRIAGE

A bright morning light wakened the young people; and Huldbrand lay musing silently. As often as he had dropped asleep, he had been scared by horrible dreams of spectres,

who suddenly took the form of fair women, or of fair women who were transformed into dragons. And when he started up from these grim visions, and saw the pale, cold moonlight streaming in at the window, he would turn an anxious look toward Undine; she lay slumbering in undisturbed beauty and peace. Then he would compose himself to sleep again—soon again to wake in terror. When he looked back upon all this in broad daylight, he was angry with himself for having let a suspicion, a shade of distrust of his beautiful wife, enter his mind. He frankly confessed to her this injustice; she answered him only by pressing his hand, and sighing from the bottom of her heart. But a look, such as her eyes had never before given, of the deepest and most confiding tenderness, left him no doubt that she forgave him. So he arose cheerfully, and joined the family in the sitting-room. The three others were gathered round the hearth looking uneasy, and neither of them having ventured to speak his thoughts yet. The Priest seemed to be secretly praying for deliverance from evil. But when the young husband appeared, beaming with happiness, the care-worn faces brightened up; nay, the Fisherman ventured upon a few courteous jokes with the Knight, which won a smile even from the good housewife. Meanwhile Undine had dressed herself, and now came in; they could not help rising to meet her, and stood still, astonished; the young creature was the same, yet so different. The Priest was the first to address her, with an air of paternal kindness, and when he raised his hands in benediction, the fair woman sank on her knees, trembling with pious awe. In a few meek and humble words, she begged him to forgive the folly of the day before, and besought him, with great emotion, to pray for the salvation of her soul. Then rising, she kissed her foster parents, and thanking them for all their kindness, she said:

"Oh, now I feel from the bottom of my heart how much you have done for me, how deeply grateful I ought to be, dear, dear people!" She seemed as if she could not caress them enough; but soon, observing the dame glance toward the breakfast, she went toward the hearth, busied herself arranging and preparing the meal, and would not suffer the good woman to take the least trouble herself.

So she went on all day; at once a young matron, and a bashful, tender, delicate bride. The three who knew her best were every moment expecting this mood to change, and give place to one of her crazy fits; but they watched in vain. There was still the same angelic mildness and sweetness. The Priest could not keep his eyes away from her, and he said more than once to the bridegroom, "Sir, it was a great treasure which Heaven bestowed upon you yesterday, by my poor ministration; cherish her worthily, and she will be to you a blessing in time and eternity."

Toward evening, Undine clasped the Knight's arm with modest tenderness, and gently led him out before the door, where the rays of the setting sun were lighting up the fresh grass, and the tall, taper stems of trees. The young wife's face wore a melting expression of love and sadness, and her lips quivered with some anxious, momentous secret, which as yet betrayed itself only by scarce audible sighs. She silently led her companion onward; if he spoke, she replied by a look which gave him no direct answer, but revealed a whole heaven of love and timid submission. So they reached the banks of the stream which had overflowed, and the Knight started on finding the wild torrent changed into a gentle rippling brook, without a trace of its former violence left. "By to-morrow it will have dried up completely," said the bride, in a faltering voice, "and thou mayest begone whither thou wilt."—"Not without thee, my Undine," said

the Knight, playfully; "consider, if I had a mind to forsake thee, the Church, the Emperor, and his ministers might step in, and bring thy truant home."—"No, no, you are free; it shall be as you please!" murmured Undine, half tears, half smiles. "But I think thou wilt not cast me away; is not my heart bound up in thine? Carry me over to that little island opposite. There I will know my fate. I could indeed easily step through the little waves; but I love to rest in thine arms! and thou *mayest* cast me off; this may be the last time." Huldbrand, full of anxious emotion, knew not how to answer. He took her up in his arms, and carried her over, now recollecting that from this very island he had borne her home to the Fisherman, on the night of his arrival. When there, he placed his fair burden on the turf, and was going to sit down beside her; but she said, "No, sit there, opposite me—I will read my doom in your eyes, before your lips have spoken it. Now listen, and I will tell you all." And she began:—

"You must know, my own love, that in each element exists a race of beings, whose form scarcely differs from yours, but who very seldom appear to mortal sight. In the flames, the wondrous Salamanders glitter and disport themselves; in the depths of earth dwell the dry, spiteful race of Gnomes; the forests are peopled by Wood-nymphs, who are also spirits of air; and the seas, the rivers and brooks contain the numberless tribes of Water-sprites. Their echoing halls of crystal, where the light of heaven pours in, with its sun and stars, are glorious to dwell in; the gardens contain beautiful coral plants, with blue and red fruits; they wander over bright sea-sands, and gay-coloured shells, among the hidden treasures of the old world, too precious to be bestowed on these latter days, and long since covered by the silver mantle of the deep: many a noble monument

still gleams there below, bedewed by the tears of Ocean, who garlands it with flowery sea-weeds and wreaths of shells. Those that dwell there below, are noble and lovely to behold, far more so than mankind. Many a fisherman has had a passing glimpse of some fair water-nymph, rising out of the sea with her song; he would then spread the report of her apparition, and these wonderful beings came to be called *Undines*. And you now see before you, my love, an Undine."

The Knight tried to persuade himself that his fair wife was in one of her wild moods, and had invented this strange tale in sport. But though he said this to himself, he could not for a moment believe it; a mysterious feeling thrilled him; and, unable to utter a word, he kept his eyes rivetted on the beautiful speaker. She shook her head sadly, heaved a deep sigh, and went on:—

"We might be happier than our human fellow-creatures (for we call you fellow-creatures, as our forms are alike), but for one great evil. We, and the other children of the elements, go down to the dust, body and spirit; not a trace of us remains and when the time comes for you to rise again to a glorified existence, we shall have perished with our native sands, flames, winds, and waves. For we have no souls; the elements move us, obey us while we live, close over us when we die; and we light spirits live as free from care as the nightingale, the gold-fish, and all such bright children of Nature. But no creatures rest content in their appointed place. My father, who is a mighty prince in the Mediterranean Sea, determined that his only child should be endowed with a soul, even at the cost of much suffering, which is ever the lot of souls. But a soul can be infused into one of our race, only by being united in the closest bands of love to one of yours. And now I have obtained

a soul; to thee I owe it, O best beloved! and for that gift I shall ever bless thee, unless thou dost devote my whole futurity to misery. For what is to become of me should thou recoil from me, and cast me off? Yet I would not detain thee by deceit. And if I am to leave thee, say so now; go back to the land alone. I will plunge into this brook; it is my uncle, who leads a wonderful, sequestered life in this forest, away from all his friends. But he is powerful, and allied to many great rivers; and as he brought me here to the Fisherman, a gay and laughing child, so he is ready to take me back to my parents, a loving, suffering, forsaken woman."

She would have gone on; but Huldbrand, full of compassion and love, caught her in his arms, and carried her back. There, with tears and kisses, he swore never to forsake his beloved wife; and said he felt more blessed than the Greek sculptor Pygmalion, whose beautiful statue dame Venus transformed into a living woman. Hanging on his arm in peaceful reliance, Undine returned; and she felt from her inmost heart, how little cause she had to regret the crystal palaces of her father.

IX.—HOW THE KNIGHT AND HIS YOUNG BRIDE DEPARTED

When Huldbrand awoke from sleep the next morning, he missed his fair companion; and again he was tormented with a doubt, whether his marriage, and the lovely Undine, might not be all a fairy dream. But she soon reappeared, came up to him, and said, "I have been out early, to see if my uncle had kept his word. He has recalled all the straying waters into his quiet bed, and now takes his lonely and pensive course through the forest as he used to do. His friends in the lake and the air are gone to rest also; all

things have returned to their usual calmness; and you may set out homeward on dry land, as soon as you please." Huldbrand felt as if dreaming still, so little could he understand his wife's wonderful relations. But he took no notice of this, and his sweet Undine's gentle attentions soon charmed every uneasy thought away.

A little while after, as they stood at the door together, looking over the fair scene with its boundary of clear waters, his heart yearned so toward this cradle of his love that he said: "But why should we go away so soon? we shall never spend happier days in yonder world, than we have passed in this peaceful nook. Let us at least see two or three more suns go down here."—"As my Lord wishes," answered Undine, with cheerful submission; "but, you see, the old people will be grieved at parting with me, whenever it is; and if we give them time to become acquainted with my soul, and with its new powers of loving and honouring them, I fear that when I go, their aged hearts will break under the load of sorrow. As yet, they take my gentle mood for a passing whim, such as they saw me liable to formerly, like a calm on the lake when the winds are lulled; and they will soon begin to love some favourite tree or flower in my place. They must not learn to know this newly obtained, affectionate heart, in the first overflowings of its tenderness, just at the moment when they are to lose me for this world; and how could I disguise it from them, if we remained together longer?"

Huldbrand agreed with her; he went to the old couple, and finding them ready to consent, he resolved upon setting out that very hour. The Priest offered to accompany them; after a hasty farewell, the pretty bride was placed on the horse by her husband, and they crossed the stream's dry bed quickly, and entered the forest. Undine shed silent

but bitter tears, while the old folks wailed after her aloud. It seemed as if some foreboding were crossing their minds, of how great their loss would prove.

The three travellers reached the deepest shades of the forest, without breaking silence. It was a fair sight to behold, as they passed through the leafy bowers: the graceful woman sitting on her noble steed, guarded on one side by the venerable Priest in the white habit of his order; on the other, by the youthful Knight, with his gorgeous attire and glittering sword. Huldbrand had no eyes but for his precious wife; Undine, who had dried her duteous tears, no thought but for him; and they soon fell into a noiseless interchange of glances and signs, which at length was interrupted by the sound of a low murmur, proceeding from the Priest and a fourth fellow-traveller, who had joined them unobserved. He wore a white robe, very like the Priest's dress, except that the hood almost covered his face, and the rest of it floated round him in such large folds that he was perpetually obliged to gather up, throw it over his arm, or otherwise arrange it; yet it did not seem to impede him at all in walking; when the young people saw him he was saying, "And so, my worthy father, I have dwelt in the forest for many a year, yet I am not what you commonly call a hermit. For, as I told you, I know nothing of penance, nor do I think it would do me much good. What makes me so fond of the woods is, that I have a very particular fancy for winding through the dark shades and forest walks, with my loose white clothes floating about me; now and then a pretty sunbeam will glance over me as I go."—"You seem to be a very curious person," replied the Priest "and I should like to know more about you."—"And pray who are you, to carry on the acquaintance?" said the stranger. "They call me Father Heilmann," answered

the Priest, "and I belong to St. Mary's monastery, beyond the lake."—"Ay, ay!" rejoined the other. "My name is Kühleborn, and if I stood upon ceremony, I might well call myself Lord of Kühleborn, or Baron (Freiherr) Kühleborn; for free I am, as the bird of the air, or a trifle more free. For instance, I must now have a word with the young woman there." And before they could look round, he was on the other side of the Priest, close to Undine, and stretching up his tall figure to whisper in her ear. But she turned hastily away, saying, "I have nothing more to do with you now." —"Heyday!" said the stranger, laughing, "what a prodigiously grand marriage yours must be, if you are to cast off your relations in this way! Have you forgotten Uncle Kühleborn, who brought you all the way here on his back so kindly?"

"But I entreat you," said Undine, "never come to me again. I am afraid of you now; and will not my husband become afraid of me, if he finds I have so strange a family?" —"My little niece," said Kühleborn, "please to remember that I am protecting you all this time; the foul Spirits of Earth might play you troublesome tricks if I did not. So you had better let me go on with you, and no more words. The old Priest there has a better memory than yours, for he would have it he knew my face very well, and that I must have been with him in the boat, when he fell into the water. And he may well say so, seeing that the wave which washed him over was none but myself, and I landed him safe on the shore, in time for your wedding."

Undine and the Knight looked at Father Heilmann, but he seemed to be plodding on in a waking dream, and not listening to what was said. Undine said to Kühleborn, "There, I can see the end of the wood; we want your help no longer, and there is nothing to disturb us but you. So,

in love and kindness I entreat you, begone, and let us go in peace." This seemed to make Kühleborn angry; he twisted his face hideously, and hissed at Undine, who cried aloud for help. Like lightning the Knight passed round her horse, and aimed a blow at Kühleborn's head with his sword. But instead of the head, he struck into a waterfall, which gushed down a high cliff near them, and now showered them all with a splash that sounded like laughter, and wetted them to the bone. The Priest, seeming to wake up, said, "Well, I was expecting this, because that brook gushed down the rock so close to us. At first I could not shake off the idea that it was a man, and was speaking to me." The waterfall whispered distinctly in Huldbrand's ear, "Rash youth, dashing youth, I chide thee not, I shame thee not; still shield thy precious wife safe and sure, rash young soldier, dashing Knight!"

A little further on they emerged into the open plains. The city lay glittering before them, and the evening sun that gilded her towers, lent its grateful warmth to dry their soaked garments.

X.—OF THEIR WAY OF LIFE IN THE TOWN

The sudden disappearance of the young Knight Huldbrand of Ringstetten had made a great stir in the city, and distressed the inhabitants, with whom his gallantry in the lists and the dance, and his gentle, courteous manners, had made him very popular. His retainers would not leave the place without their master, but yet none had the courage to seek him in the haunted forest. They therefore remained in their hostelry, idly hoping, as men are so apt to do, and keeping alive the remembrance of their lost lord by lamentations. But soon after, when the tempest raged and the

rivers overflowed, few doubted that the handsome stranger must have perished. Bertalda, among others, mourned him for lost, and was ready to curse herself, for having urged him to the fatal ride through the forest. Her ducal foster parents had arrived to take her away, but she prevailed upon them to wait a little, in hope that a true report of Huldbrand's death or safety might reach them. She tried to persuade some of the young knights who contended for her favour, to venture into the forest and seek for the noble adventurer. But she would not offer her hand as the reward, because she still hoped to bestow it some day on the wanderer himself; and to obtain a glove, a scarf, or some such token from her, none of them cared to expose his life to bring back so dangerous a rival.

Now, when Huldbrand unexpectedly reappeared, it spread joy among his servants, and all the people generally, except Bertalda; for while the others were pleased at his bringing with him such a beautiful wife, and Father Heilmann to bear witness to their marriage, it could not but grieve *her:* first, because the young Knight had really won her heart; and next, because she had betrayed her feelings by so openly lamenting his absence, far more than was now becoming. However, she behaved like a prudent woman, and suited her conduct to the circumstances, by living in the most cordial intimacy with Undine—who passed in the town for a princess, released by Huldbrand from the power of some wicked enchanter of the forest. If she or her husband were questioned about it, they gave evasive answers; Father Heilmann's lips were sealed on all such idle topics, beside which, he had left them soon after they arrived, and returned to his cloister: so the citizens were left to their own wondering conjectures, and even Bertalda came no nearer the truth than others.

Meanwhile, Undine grew daily more fond of this winning damsel. "We must have known each other before," she would often say, "or else some secret attraction draws us toward each other; for without some cause, some strange, mysterious cause, I am sure nobody would love another as I have loved you from the moment we met." Bertalda, on her part, could not deny that she felt strongly inclined to like Undine, notwithstanding the grounds of complaint she thought she had against this happy rival. The affection being mutual, the one persuaded her parents, the other her wedded lord, to defer the day of departure repeatedly; they even went so far as to propose that Bertalda should accompany Undine to the castle of Ringstetten, near the source of the Danube.

They were talking of this one fine evening, as they sauntered by starlight round the market-place, which was surrounded by high trees; the young couple had invited Bertalda to join their evening stroll, and they now paced backward and forward in pleasant talk, with the dark blue sky over their heads, and a beautiful fountain before them in the centre, which, as it bubbled and sprang up into fanciful shapes, often caught their attention, and interrupted the conversation. All around them was serene and pleasant; through the foliage gleamed the light of many a lamp from the surrounding houses; and the ear was soothed by the hum of children at play, and of sauntering groups like themselves; they enjoyed at once the pleasure of solitude, and the social happiness of being near the cheerful haunts of men. Every little difficulty that had occurred to their favourite plan, seemed to vanish upon nearer examination, and the three friends could not imagine that Bertalda's consent to the journey need be delayed a moment. But as she was on the point of naming a day for joining them and setting out,

a very tall man came forward from the middle of the place, bowed to them respectfully, and began whispering in Undine's ear. She though apparently displeased with the interruption and with the speaker, stepped aside with him, and they began a low discourse together, in what sounded like a foreign language. Huldbrand thought he knew this strange man's face, and fixed his attention upon him so earnestly, that he neither heard nor answered the astonished Bertalda's questions. All at once Undine clapped her hands joyfully, and turned her back, laughing, upon the stranger; he shook his head and walked off in an angry, hurried manner, and stepped into the fountain. This confirmed Huldbrand in his guess; while Bertalda inquired, "My dear Undine, what business had that man of the fountain with you?" Her friend smiled archly and replied, "On your birthday, the day after to-morrow, I will tell you, my sweet girl;" and she would say no more. She only pressed Bertalda to come and dine with them on that day, and bring her foster parents; after which they separated.

"Kühleborn?" said Huldbrand to his wife with a suppressed shudder, as they walked home through the dark streets. "Yes, it was he," replied Undine "and he tried to put all sorts of nonsense into my head. However, without intending it he delighted me by one piece of news. If you wish to hear it, now, my kind lord, you have but to say so, and I will tell you every word. But if you like to give your Undine a *very* great delight, you will wait two days, and then have your share in the surprise."

The Knight readily granted her what she had asked so meekly and gracefully; and as she dropped asleep she murmured, "How it will delight her! how little she expects such a message from the mysterious man—dear, dear Bertalda!"

XI.—BERTALDA'S BIRTHDAY

The guests were now assembled at table; Bertalda sat at the top, adorned with flowers like the goddess of spring, and flashing with jewels, the gifts of many friends and relations. Undine and Huldbrand were on either side of her. When the sumptuous meal was ended, and the dessert served, the doors were opened—according to the good old German custom—to let the common people look in and have their share in the gaiety of the rich. The attendants offered wine and cake to the assembled crowd. Huldbrand and Bertalda were eagerly watching for the promised disclosure, and both kept their eyes fixed upon Undine. But she was still silent; her cheeks dimpled occasionally with a bright, conscious smile. Those that knew what she was about to do, could perceive that her interesting secret was ready to burst from her lips, but that she was playfully determined to keep it in, as children sometimes will save their daintiest morsels for the last. Her silent glee communicated itself to the other two, who watched impatiently for the happy news that was about to gladden their hearts. Some of the company now asked Undine for a song. She seemed to be prepared with one, and sent for her lute, to which she sang as follows:—

The sun gilds the wave,
  The flowers are sweet,
And the ocean doth lave
  The grass at our feet!

What lies on the earth
  So blooming and gay?
Doth a blossom peep forth
  And greet the new day?

Ah, 'tis a fair child!
  She sports with the flowers,
So gladsome and mild,
  Through the warm sunny hours

O sweet one, who brought thee?
  From far distant shore
Old Ocean he caught thee,
  And many a league bore.

Poor babe, all in vain
  Thou dost put forth thy hand
None clasp it again,
  'Tis a bleak foreign land:

The flowers bloom brightly,
  And soft breathes the air,
But all pass thee lightly:
  Thy mother is far!

Thy life scarce begun,
  Thy smiles fresh from heaven,
Thy best treasure is gone,
  To another 't is given.

A gallant charger treads the dell,
  His noble rider pities thee;
He takes thee home, he tends thee well,
  And cares for thee right gen'rously.

Well thou becom'st thy station high,
  And bloom'st the fairest in the land;
And yet, alas! the purest joy
  Is left on thine own distant strand.

Undine put down her lute with a melancholy smile and the eyes of the Duke and Duchess filled with tears: "So it was when I found you, my poor innocent orphan!" said the Duke with great emotion "as the fair singer said, your best treasure was gone and we have been unable to supply its place."

"Now let us think of the poor parents," said Undine; and she struck the chords and sang:—

I

Mother roves from room to room
  Seeking rest, she knows not how,
The house is silent as the tomb,
  And who is there to bless her now?

II

Silent house! Oh words of sorrow!
  Where is now her darling child?
She who should have cheered the morrow,
  And the evening hours beguiled?

III

The buds are swelling on the tree,
  The sun returns when night is o'er;
But, mother, ne'er comes joy to thee,
  Thy child shall bless thine eyes no more

IV

And when the evening breezes blow,
  And father seeks his own fireside,
He smiles, forgetful of his woe,
  But ah! his tears that smile shall hide.

V

Father knows that in his home
  Deathlike stillness dwells for aye;
The voice of mirth no more shall come,
  And mother sighs the livelong day.

"O Undine, for God's sake, where are my parents?" cried Bertalda, weeping. "Surely you know, you have discovered it, most wonderful woman; else how could you have stirred my inmost heart as you have done? They are perhaps even now in the room—can it be?"—and her eyes glanced over the gay assembly, and fixed upon a reigning Princess who sat next to the Duke. But Undine bent forward to the door, her eyes overflowing with the happiest tears. "Where are they, the poor anxious parents?" said

she; and the old Fisherman and his wife came out from the crowd of bystanders. They turned an inquiring eye upon Undine, and then upon the handsome lady whom they were to call daughter. "There she is," faltered the delighted Undine, and the aged couple caught their long-lost child in their arms, thanking God, and weeping aloud.

Affrighted and enraged, Bertalda shrank from their embrace. It was more than her proud spirit could bear, to be thus degraded; at a moment, too, when she was fully expecting an increase of splendour, and fancy was showering pearls and diadems upon her head. She suspected that her rival had contrived this, on purpose to mortify her before Huldbrand and all the world. She reviled both Undine and the old people; the hateful words, "Treacherous creature! and bribed wretches!" burst from her lips. The old woman said in a half whisper, "Dear me, she has grown up a wicked woman; and yet my heart tells me she is my own child." The Fisherman has clasped his hands, and was praying silently that this girl might not prove to be theirs indeed. Undine, pale as death, looked from Bertalda to the parents, from the parents to Bertalda, and could not recover the rude shock she had sustained, at being plunged from all her happy dreams into a state of fear and misery, such as she had never known before.

"Have you a soul? Have you indeed a soul, Bertalda?" she exclaimed once or twice, trying to recall her angry friend to reason, from what she took for a fit of madness, or a kind of nightmare. But Bertalda only stormed the louder; the repulsed parents wailed piteously, and the company began to dispute angrily and to side with one or the other; when Undine stepped forward, and asked with so much earnest gentleness to be listened to in her husband's house, that all was hushed in a moment. She took the place

which Bertalda had left, at the head of the table, and as she stood there in modest dignity, the eyes of all turned toward her, and she said: "You all that cast such angry looks at each other, and so cruelly spoil the joy of my poor feast, alas! I little knew what your foolish angry passions were, and I think I never shall understand you. What I had hoped would do so much good has led to all this; but that is not my fault, it is your own doing, believe me; I have little more to say, but one thing you must hear: I have told no falsehood. Proofs I have none to give, beyond my word, but I will swear to the truth of it. I heard it from him who decoyed Bertalda from her parents into the water, and then laid her down in the meadow where the Duke was to pass."

"She is a sorceress," cried Bertalda, "a witch who has dealings with evil spirits! she has acknowledged it."

"I have not," said Undine, with a heaven of innocence and guilelessness in her eyes. "Nor am I a witch—only look at me!"

"Then she lies," cried Bertalda, "and she dares not assert that I was born of these mean people. My noble parents, I beseech you take me out of this room, and this town, where they are leagued together to insult me."

But the venerable Duke stood still, and his lady said, "We must first sift this matter to the bottom. Nothing shall make me leave the room till my doubts are satisfied."

Then the old woman came up, made a deep obeisance to the Duchess, and said, "You give me courage to speak, my noble, worthy lady. I must tell you, that if this ungodly young woman is my daughter, I shall know her by a violet mark between her shoulders, and another on the left instep. If she would but come with me into another room——"

"I will not uncover myself before that country-woman,' said Bertalda, proudly turning away.

"But before me, you will," rejoined the Duchess gravely. "You shall go with me into that room, young woman, and the good dame will accompany us." They withdrew together, leaving the party in silent suspense. In a few minutes they came back; Bertalda was deadly pale, and the Duchess said, "Truth is truth, and I am bound to declare that our Lady Hostess has told us perfectly right. Bertalda is the Fisherman's daughter; more than that, it concerns nobody to know." And the princely pair departed, taking with them their adopted child, and followed (upon a sign from the Duke) by the Fisherman and his wife. The rest of the assembly broke up, in silence or with secret murmurs, and Undine sank into Huldbrand's arms, weeping bitterly.

XII.—HOW THEY LEFT THE IMPERIAL CITY

There was certainly much to displease the Lord of Ringstetten in the events of this day; yet he could not look back upon them, without feeling proud of the guileless truth and the generosity of heart shown by his lovely wife. "If indeed her soul was my gift," thought he, "it is nevertheless much better than my own;" and he devoted himself to the task of soothing her grief, and determined he would take her away the next morning from a spot now so full of bitter recollections.

They were mistaken, however, in thinking that she had lost in the eyes of the world by this adventure. So prepared were the minds of the people to find something mysterious in her, that her strange discovery of Bertalda's origin scarcely surprised them; while, on the other hand, everyone that heard of Bertalda's history and of her passionate behaviour,

was moved with indignation. Of this, the Knight and Undine were not aware; nor would it have given them any comfort, for she was still as jealous of Bertalda's good name as of her own. Upon the whole, they had no greater wish than to leave the town without delay.

At daybreak next morning, Undine's chariot was in readiness at the door, and the steeds of Huldbrand and of his squires stood around it, pawing the ground with impatience. As the Knight led his fair bride to the door, a fishing girl accosted them. "We want no fish," said Huldbrand; "we are just going away." The girl began to sob bitterly, and they then recognised her as Bertalda. They immediately turned back into the house with her; and she said that the Duke and Duchess had been so incensed at her violence the day before, as to withdraw their protection from her, though not without giving her a handsome allowance. The Fisherman too had received a liberal gift, and had departed that evening with his wife, to return to the promontory. "I would have gone with them," she continued, "but the old Fisherman, whom they call my father——"

"And so he is, Bertalda," interrupted Undine. "He is your father. For the man you saw at the fountain told me how it is. He was trying to persuade me that I had better not take you to Ringstetten, and he let drop the secret."

"Well then," said Bertalda, "my father—if so it must be —my father said, 'You shall not live with us till you are an altered creature. Take courage and come across the haunted forest to us; that will show that you sincerely wish to belong to your parents. But do not come in your finery; be like what you are, a fisherman's daughter.' And I will do as he bids me; for the whole world has forsaken me, and

I have nothing left, but to live and die humbly in a poor hut, alone with my lowly parents. I do dread the forest very much. They say it is full of grim spectres, and I am so timid! But what can I do? I came here only to implore the Lady of Ringstetten's pardon for my rude language yesterday. I have no doubt you meant what you did kindly, noble Dame; but you little knew what a trial your words would be to me, and I was so alarmed and bewildered, that many a hasty, wicked word escaped my lips. Ah forgive me, forgive me! I am unhappy enough already. Only consider what I was yesterday morning, even at the beginning of your feast, and what I am now."

Her words were lost in a flood of bitter tears, and Undine, equally affected, fell weeping on her neck. It was long before her emotion would let her speak: at length she said, "You shall go to Ringstetten with us; all shall be as we had settled it before; only call me Undine again, and not 'Lady' and 'noble Dame.' You see, we began by being exchanged in our cradles; our lives have been linked from that hour, and we will try to bind them so closely that no human power shall sever us. Come with us to Ringstetten, and all will be well. We will live like sisters there, trust me for arranging that." Bertalda looked timidly at Huldbrand. The sight of this beautiful, forsaken maiden affected him; he gave her his hand and encouraged her kindly to trust herself to him and his wife. "As to your parents," said he, "we will let them know why you do not appear;" and he would have said much more concerning the good old folks, but he observed that Bertalda shuddered at the mention of them, and therefore dropped the subject. He gave her his arm, placed first her and then Undine in the carriage, and rode cheerfully after them; he urged the drivers on so effectually, that they very soon found them-

selves out of sight of the city, and beyond the reach of sad recollections—and the two ladies could fully enjoy the beautiful country through which the road wound along.

After a few days' travelling, they arrived, one sunny evening, at the Castle of Ringstetten. Its young lord had much business with his steward and labourers to occupy him, so that Undine was left alone with Bertalda. They took a walk on the high ramparts of the castle, and admired the rich Swabian landscape, which lay far and wide around them. A tall man suddenly came up, with a courteous obeisance; and Bertalda could not help thinking him very like the ominous man of the fountain. The likeness struck her still more, when, upon an impatient and even menacing gesture of Undine's, he went away with the same hasty step and shake of the head as before.

"Do not be afraid, dear Bertalda," said Undine, "the ugly man shall not harm you this time." After which she told her whole history, beginning from her birth, and how they had been exchanged in their earliest childhood. At first her friend looked at her with serious alarm; she thought Undine was possessed by some delirium. But she became convinced it was all true, as she listened to the well-connected narrative, which accounted so well for the strange events of the last months; besides which, there is something in genuine truth which finds an answer in every heart, and can hardly be mistaken. She was bewildered, when she found herself one of the actors in a living fairy tale, and as wild a tale as any she had read. She gazed upon Undine with reverence; but could not help feeling a chill thrown over her affection for her; and that evening at supper time, she wondered at the Knight's fond love and familiarity toward a being, whom she now looked upon as rather a spirit than a human creature.

XIII.—HOW THEY LIVED IN THE CASTLE OF RINGSTETTEN

As he who relates this tale is moved to the heart by it, and hopes that it may affect his readers too, he entreats of them one favour; namely, that they will bear with him while he passes rapidly over a long space of time; and be content if he barely touches upon what happened therein. He knows well that some would relate in great detail, step by step, how Huldbrand's heart began to be estranged from Undine, and drawn toward Bertalda; while she cared not to disguise from him her ardent love; and how between them the poor injured wife came to be rather feared than pitied—and when he showed her kindness, a cold shiver would often creep over him and send him back to the child of earth, Bertalda;—all this the author knows, might be dwelt upon; nay, perhaps it ought to be so. But his heart shrinks from such a task, for he has met with such passages in real life, and cannot even abide their shadows in his memory. Perhaps, gentle reader, such feelings are known to thee also, for they are the common lot of mortal man. Well is thee if thou hast felt, not inflicted, these pangs; in these cases it is more blessed to receive than to give. As such recollections wake up from their cells, they will but cast a soft shade over the past; and it may be the thought of thy withered blossoms, once so fondly loved, brings a gentle tear down thy cheek. Enough of this: we will not go on to pierce our hearts with a thousand separate arrows, but content ourselves with saying, that so it happened in the present instance.

Poor Undine drooped day by day, and the others were neither of them happy; Bertalda especially was uneasy, and ready to suspect the injured wife, whenever she fancied herself slighted by Huldbrand; meantime she had gradually

assumed the command in the house, and the deluded Huldbrand supported her openly. Undine looked on, in meek resignation. To increase the discomfort of their lives, there was no end to the mysterious sights and sounds that haunted Huldbrand and Bertalda in the vaulted galleries of the castle; such as had never been heard of before. The long white man, too well known to him as Uncle Kühleborn, and to her as the spirit of the fountain, often showed his threatening countenance to both; but chiefly to Bertalda, who had more than once been made ill by the fright, and thought seriously of leaving the castle. But her love for Huldbrand detained her, and she quieted her conscience by thinking, that it had never come to a declaration of love between them; and, besides, she would not have known which way to turn. After receiving the Lord of Ringstetten's message, that Bertalda was with them, the old Fisherman had traced a few lines, scarcely legible, from infirmity and long disuse, saying, "I am now a poor old widower; for my dear good wife is dead. But, lonely as I am by my fireside, I had rather Bertalda stayed away than come here. Provided she does not harm my dear Undine! My curse be upon her if she does." Bertalda scattered these last words to the winds, but treasured up her father's command that she should not join him: as is the way with us selfish beings.

One day, when Huldbrand had just ridden out, Undine sent for her servants and desired them to fetch a large stone and carefully to stop up the mouth of the magnificent fountain, which played in the centre of the court. The men objected, that they must then always go down the valley to a great distance for water. Undine smiled mournfully. "It grieves me to add to your burdens, my good friends," said she, "I had rather go and fill my pitcher myself; but

this fountain must be sealed up. Trust me, nothing else will do, and it is our only way of escaping a much worse evil."

The servants rejoiced at any opportunity of pleasing their gentle mistress; not a word more was said, and they lifted the huge stone. They had raised it, and were about to let it down on the mouth of the spring, when Bertalda ran up, calling out to them to stop: the water of this fountain was the best for her complexion, and she never would consent to its being stopped. But Undine, instead of yielding as usual, kept firmly, though gently, to her resolution; she said that it behooved her, as mistress of the house, to order all such matters as appeared best to her, and none but her lord and husband should call her to account. "Look, oh look!" cried Bertalda, eagerly and angrily, "how the poor bright water curls and writhes, because you would deprive it of every gleam of sunshine, and of the cheerful faces of men, whose mirror it was created to be!" In truth, the spring did writhe and bubble up wonderfully, just as if someone were trying to force his way through; but Undine pressed them the more to dispatch the work. Nor was there much need to repeat her commands. The household people were too glad at once to obey their gentle lady, and to mortify the pride of Bertalda, in spite of whose threats and wrath, the stone was soon firmly fastened down on the mouth of the spring. Undine bent over it thoughtfully, and wrote on its surface with her delicate fingers. Something very hard and sharp must have been hidden in her hand; for when she walked away, and the others came up, they found all manner of strange characters on the stone, none of which were there before.

When the Knight came home that evening, Bertalda

received him with tears and complaints of Undine. He looked sternly at his poor wife, who mournfully cast down her eyes, saying, however, with firmness, "My lord and husband would not chide the meanest of his vassals, without giving him a hearing, much less his wedded wife."— "Speak, then; what was your reason for this strange proceeding?" said the Knight with a frown. "I would rather tell it you quite alone!" sighed Undine. "You can say it just as well in Bertalda's presence," replied he. "Yes, if thou requirest it," said Undine, "but require it not." She looked so humble, and so submissive in her touching beauty, that the Knight's heart was melted, as by a sunbeam from happier days. He took her affectionately by the hand, and led her to his own room, where she spoke to him as follows.

"You know that wicked Uncle Kühleborn, my dearest lord, and have often been provoked at meeting him about the castle. Bertalda, too, has been often terrified by him. No wonder; he is soulless, shallow, and unthinking as a mirror, in whom no feeling can pierce the surface. He has two or three times seen that you were displeased with me, that I in my childishness could not help weeping, and that Bertalda might chance to laugh at the same moment. And upon this he builds all manner of unjust suspicions, and interferes, unasked, in our concerns. What is the use of my reproaching him, or repulsing, him with angry words? He believes nothing that I say. A poor cold life is his! How should he know, that the sorrows and the joys of love are so sweetly alike, so closely linked, that it is not in human power to part them. When a tear gushes out, a smile lies beneath; and a smile will draw the tears from their secret cells."

She smiled through her tears in Huldbrand's face, and

a warm ray of his former love shot through his heart. She perceived this, pressed closer to him, and with a few tears of joy she went on.

"As I found it impossible to get rid of our tormentor by words, I had nothing for it, but to shut the door against him. And his only access to us was that fountain. He has quarrelled with the other fountain spirits in the surrounding valleys, and it is much lower down the Danube, below the junction of some friends with the great river, that his power begins again. Therefore I stopped the mouth of our fountain, and inscribed the stone with characters which cripple the might of my restless uncle; so that he can no longer cross your path, or mine, or Bertalda's. Men can indeed lift the stone off as easily as ever; the inscription has no power over them. So you are free to comply with Bertalda's wish; but indeed, she little knows what she asks. Against her the wild Kühleborn has a most particular spite, and if some of his forebodings were to come true, (as they might, without her intending any harm) O, dearest, even thou wert not free from danger!"

Huldbrand deeply felt the generosity of his noble-minded wife, in so zealously shutting out her formidable protector, even when reviled by Bertalda for so doing. He clasped her fondly in his arms, and said with much emotion, "The stone shall remain; and everything shall be done as thou wishest, now and hereafter, my sweetest Undine."

Scarce could she trust these words of love, after so dreary an estrangement; she returned his caresses with joyful but timid gratitude, and at length said, "My own dear love, as you are so exceedingly kind to me to-day, may I ask you to promise one thing? Herein you are like the summer: is he not most glorious when he decks his brows with thunders, and frowns upon us from his throne of clouds? So

it is when your eyes flash lightning; it becomes you well, although in my weakness I may often shed a tear at it. Only—if you would promise to refrain from it when we are sailing, or even near any water. For there, you see, my relations have a right to control me. They might relentlessly tear me from you in their wrath, fancying that there is an insult offered to one of their race; and I should be doomed to spend the rest of my life in the crystal palaces below, without ever coming to you; or if they did send me up again—oh Heaven, that would be far worse! No, no, my best beloved; you will not let it come to that, if you love your poor Undine."

He solemnly promised to do as she asked him, and they returned to the saloon, quite restored to comfort and peace. They met Bertalda, followed by a few labourers whom she had sent for, and she said in a tone of bitterness that had grown common with her of late, "So, now your private consultation is over, and we may have the stone taken up. Make haste, you people, and do it for me." But Huldbrand, incensed at her arrogance, said shortly and decidedly, "The stone shall not be touched," and he then reproved Bertalda for her rudeness to his wife; upon which the labourers walked off, exulting secretly, while Bertalda hurried away to her chamber, pale and disturbed.

The hour of supper came, and they waited in vain for Bertalda. A message was sent to her; the servants found her room empty, and brought back only a sealed letter directed to the Knight. He opened it with trepidation and read, "I feel with shame that I am only a fisherman's daughter. Having forgotten it a moment, I will expiate my crime in the wretched hut of my parents. Live happy with your beautiful wife!"

Undine was sincerely grieved; she entreated Huldbrand

to pursue their friend at once, and bring her back with him. Alas! there was little need of entreaty. His passion for Bertalda returned with fresh violence; he searched the castle all over, asking everyone if they could tell him in what direction the fair one had fled. He could discover nothing; and now he had mounted his horse in the court, and stood ready to set forth, and try the route by which he had brought Bertalda to the castle. A peasant boy just then came up, saying that he had met the lady riding toward the Black Valley. Like a shot the Knight darted through the gate, and took that direction, without heeding Undine's anxious cries from a window: "To the Black Valley? oh, not there! Huldbrand, not there! Or take me with you, for God's sake!" Finding it vain to cry, she had her white palfrey saddled in all haste, and galloped after her husband, without allowing anyone to attend her.

XIV.—HOW BERTALDA DROVE HOME WITH THE KNIGHT

The Black Valley lay among the deepest recesses of the mountains. What it is called now none can tell. In those times it bore that name among the countrymen, on account of the deep gloom shed over it by many high trees, mostly pines. Even the brook which gushed down between the cliffs was tinged with black, and never sparkled like the merry streams from which nothing intercepts the blue of heaven. Now, in the dusk of twilight, it looked darker still as it gurgled between the rocks. The Knight spurred his horse along its banks, now fearing to lose ground in his pursuit, and now again, that he might overlook the fugitive in her hiding-place, if he hurried past too swiftly. He presently found himself far advanced in the valley, and hoped he must soon overtake her, if he were but in the right track. Then again, the thought that it might be a wrong

one roused the keenest anxiety in his breast. Where was the tender Bertalda to lay her head, if he missed her in this bleak, stormy night, which was setting in, black and awful, upon the valley? And now he saw something white gleaming through the boughs, on the slope of the mountain; he took it for Bertalda's robe and made for it. But the horse started back, and reared so obstinately that Huldbrand, impatient of delay, and having already found him difficult to manage among the brambles of the thicket, dismounted, and fastened the foaming steed to a tree; he then felt his way through the bushes on foot. The boughs splashed his head and cheeks roughly with cold wet dew; far off, he heard the growl of thunder beyond the mountains, and the whole strange scene had such an effect upon him, that he became afraid of approaching the white figure, which he now saw lying on the ground at a short distance. And yet he could distinguish it to be a woman, dressed in long white garments like Bertalda's, asleep or in a swoon. He came close to her, made the boughs rustle, and his sword ring—but she stirred not. "Bertalda!" cried he; first gently, then louder and louder—in vain. When at length he shouted the beloved name with the whole strength of his lungs, a faint mocking echo returned it from the cavities of the rocks—"Bertalda!" but the sleeper awoke not. He bent over her; but the gloom of the valley and the shades of night prevented his discerning her features. At length, though kept back by some boding fears, he knelt down by her on the earth, and just then a flash of lightning lighted up the valley. He saw a hideous distorted face close to his own, and heard a hollow voice say, "Give me a kiss, thou sweet shepherd!" With a cry of horror Huldbrand started up, and the monster after him. "Go home!" it cried, "the bad spirits are abroad—go home! or I have you!"

and its long white arm nearly grasped him. "Spiteful Kühleborn," cried the Knight, taking courage, "what matters it, I know thee, foul spirit! There is a kiss for thee!" And he raised his sword furiously against the figure. But it dissolved, and a drenching shower made it sufficiently clear to the Knight what enemy he had encountered. "He would scare me away from Bertalda," said he aloud to himself; "he thinks he can subdue me by his absurd tricks, and make me leave the poor terrified maiden in his power, that he may wreak his vengeance upon her. But *that* he never shall—wretched goblin! What power lies in a human breast when steeled by firm resolve, the contemptible juggler has yet to learn." And he felt the truth of his own words, and seemed to have nerved himself afresh by them. He thought, too, that fortune now began to aid him, for before he had got back to his horse again, he distinctly heard the piteous voice of Bertalda as if near at hand, borne toward him on the winds as their howling mingled with the thunder. Eagerly did he push on in that direction, and he found the trembling damsel was just attempting to climb the mountain's side, in order, at any risk, to get out of these awful shades.

He met her affectionately and however proudly she might before have determined to hold out, she could not but rejoice at being rescued by her much-loved Huldbrand from the fearful solitude, and warmly invited to return to his cheerful home in the castle. She accompanied him with scarcely a word of reluctance, but was so exhausted, that the Knight felt much relieved when they had reached the horse in safety; he hastened to loose him, and would have placed his tender charge upon him, and walked by her side to guide her carefully through the dangerous shades. But Kühleborn's mad pranks had driven the horse quite

wild. Hardly could the Knight himself have sprung upon the terrified plunging creature's back: to place the trembling Bertalda upon him was quite impossible; so they made up their minds to walk home. With his horse's bridle over one arm, Huldbrand supported his half-fainting companion on the other. Bertalda mustered what strength she could, in order the sooner to get beyond this dreaded valley, but fatigue weighed her down like lead, and every limb shook under her; partly from the recollection of all she had already suffered from Kühleborn's spite, and partly from terror at the continued crashing of the tempest through the mountain forests.

At length she slid down from her protector's arm, and sinking on the moss, she said: "Leave me to die here, noble Huldbrand; I reap the punishment of my folly, and must sink under this load of fatigue and anguish."—"Never, my precious friend, never will I forsake you," cried Huldbrand, vainly striving to curb his raging steed, who was now beginning to start and plunge worse than ever: the Knight contrived to keep him at some distance from the exhausted maiden, so as to save her the terror of seeing him near her. But no sooner had he withdrawn himself and the wild animal a few steps, than she began to call him back in the most piteous manner, thinking he was indeed going to desert her in this horrible wilderness. He was quite at a loss what to do: gladly would he have let the horse gallop away in the darkness and expend his wild fury, but that he feared he might rush down upon the very spot where Bertalda lay.

In this extremity of distress, it gave him unspeakable comfort to descry a wagon slowly descending the stony road behind him. He called out for help: a man's voice replied telling him to have patience, but promising to come to his aid; soon two white horses became visible through

the thicket, and next the white smock-frock of the wagoner, and a large sheet of white linen that covered his goods inside. "Ho, stop!" cried the man, and the obedient horses stood still. "I see well enough," said he, "what ails the beast. When first I came through these parts my horses were just as troublesome; because there is a wicked water-sprite living hard by, who takes delight in making them play tricks. But I know a charm for this; if you will give me leave to whisper it in your horse's ear, you will see him as quiet as mine yonder in a moment."—"Try your charm, if it will do any good!" said the impatient Knight. The driver pulled the unruly horse's head toward him, and whispered a couple of words in his ear. At once the animal stood still, tamed and pacified, and showed no remains of his former fury but by panting and snorting, as if he still chafed inwardly. This was no time for Huldbrand to inquire how it had been done. He agreed with the wagoner that Bertalda should be taken into the wagon, which by his account was loaded with bales of soft cotton, and conveyed to the Castle of Ringstetten, while the Knight followed on horseback. But his horse seemed too much spent by his former violence to be able to carry his master so far, and the man persuaded Huldbrand to get into the wagon with Bertalda. The horse was to be fastened behind. "We shall go down hill," said the man, "and that is light work for my horses." The Knight placed himself by Bertalda, his horse quietly followed them, and the driver walked by steadily and carefully.

In the deep stillness of night, while the storm growled more and more distant, and in the consciousness of safety and easy progress, Huldbrand and Bertalda insensibly got into confidential discourse. He tenderly reproached her for having so hastily fled; she excused herself with

bashful emotions, and through all she said it appeared most clearly that her heart was all his own. Huldbrand was too much engrossed by the expression of her words to attend to their apparent meaning, and he only replied to the former. Upon this, the wagoner cried out in a voice that rent the air, "Now my horses, up with you; show us what you are made of, my fine fellows." The Knight put out his head and saw the horses treading or rather swimming through the foaming waters, while the wheels whirled loudly and rapidly like those of a water-mill, and the wagoner was standing upon the top of his wagon, overlooking the floods. "Why, what road is this? It will take us into the middle of the stream," cried Huldbrand. "No, sir," cried the driver laughing; "it is just the other way. The stream is coming into the middle of the road. Look round, and see how it is all flooded."

In fact, the whole valley was now heaving with waves, that had swollen rapidly to a great height. "This must be Kühleborn, the wicked sprite, trying to drown us!" cried the Knight. "Have you no charm to keep him off, friend?"—"I do know of one," said the driver, "but I can't and won't make use of it, till you know who I am." —"Is this a time for riddles?" shouted the Knight; "the flood is rising every moment, and what care I to know who you are?"—"It rather concerns you, however, to know," said the driver, "for I am Kühleborn." And he grinned hideously into the wagon—which was now a wagon no longer, nor were the horses horses; but all dissolved into foaming waves; the wagoner himself shot up into a giant waterspout, bore down the struggling horse into the flood, and, towering over the heads of the hapless pair, till he had swelled into a watery fountain, he would have swallowed them up the next moment.

But now the sweet voice of Undine was heard above the wild uproar; the moon shone out between the clouds, and at the same instant Undine came into sight, upon the high grounds above them. She addressed Kühleborn in a commanding tone, the huge wave laid itself down, muttering and murmuring; the waters rippled gently away in the moon's soft light, and Undine alighted like a white dove from her airy height, and led them to a soft green spot on the hillside, where she refreshed their jaded spirits with choice food. She then helped Bertalda to mount her own white palfrey, and at length they all three reached the Castle of Ringstetten in safety.

XV.—THE TRIP TO VIENNA

For some time after this adventure they led a quiet and peaceful life in the castle. The Knight was deeply touched by his wife's angelic goodness, so signally displayed by her pursuing and saving them in the Black Valley, where their lives were threatened by Kühleborn. Undine herself was happy in the peace of an approving conscience; besides that, many a gleam of hope now brightened her path, as her husband's love and confidence seemed to revive; Bertalda meanwhile was grateful, modest, and timid, without claiming any merit for being so. If either of her companions alluded to the sealing up of the fountain, or the adventures in the Black Valley, she would implore them to spare her on those subjects, because she could not think of the fountain without a blush, nor the valley without a shudder. She was therefore told nothing further; indeed, what would have been the use of enlightening her? Nothing could add to the peace and happiness which had taken up their abode in the Castle of Ringstetten; they enjoyed the present in

full security, and the future lay before them, all blooming with fair fruits and flowers.

The winter had gone by without any interruption to their social comfort; and spring, with her young green shoots and bright blue skies, began to smile upon men; their hearts felt light, like the young season, and from its returning birds of passage, they caught a fancy to travel. One day as they were walking together near the sources of the Danube, Huldbrand fell into talk about the glories of that noble river, how proudly he flowed on, through fruitful lands, to the spot where the majestic city of Vienna crowned his banks, and how every mile of his course was marked by fresh grandeur and beauty. "How delightful it would be to follow his course down to Vienna!" cried Bertalda; but instantly relapsing into her timid, chastened manner, she blushed and was silent. This touched Undine, and in her eagerness to give her friend pleasure, she said: "And why should we not take the trip?" Bertalda jumped for joy, and their fancy began to paint this pleasant recreation in the brighest colours. Huldbrand encouraged them cheerfully, but whispered once to Undine: "But, should not we get within Kühleborn's power again, down there?"— "Let him come," said she, laughing; "I shall be with you, and in my presence he durst not attempt any mischief."

So the only possible objection seemed removed and they prepared for departure, and were soon sailing along, full of spirit and of gay hopes. But, O Man! it is not for thee to wonder when the course of events differs widely from the paintings of thy fancy. The treacherous foe, that lures us to our ruin, lulls his victim to rest with sweet music and golden dreams. Our guardian angel, on the contrary, will often rouse us by a sharp and awakening blow.

The first days they spent on the Danube were days of

extraordinary enjoyment. The further they floated down the proud stream the nobler and fairer grew the prospect. But, just as they had reached a most lovely district, the first sight of which had promised them great delight, the unruly Kühleborn began openly to give signs of his presence and power. At first they were only sportive tricks, because, whenever he ruffled the stream and raised the wind, Undine repressed him by a word or two, and made him again subside at once; but his attempts soon began again, and again, Undine was obliged to warn him off; so that the pleasure of the little party was grievously disturbed. To make things worse, the watermen would mutter many a dark surmise into each other's ears, and cast strange looks at the three gentlefolks, whose very servants began to feel suspicion, and to show distrust of their lord. Huldbrand said to himself more than once, "This comes of uniting with other than one's like: a son of earth may not marry a wondrous maid of ocean." To justify himself (as we all love to do) he would add, "But I did not know she was a maid of ocean. If I am to be pursued and fettered wherever I go by the mad freaks of her relations, mine is the misfortune, not the fault." Such reflections somewhat checked his self-reproaches; but they made him the more disposed to accuse, nay, even to hate Undine. Already he began to scowl upon her, and the poor wife understood but too well his meaning. Exhausted by this, and by her constant exertions against Kühleborn, she sank back one evening in the boat, and was lulled by its gentle motion into a deep sleep.

But no sooner were her eyes closed, than everyone in the boat thought he saw, just opposite his own eyes, a terrific human head rising above the water; not like the head of a swimmer, but planted upright on the surface of the river,

and keeping pace with the boat. Each turned to his neighbour to show him the cause of his terror, and found him looking equally frightened, but pointing in a different direction, where the half-laughing, half-scowling goblin met his eyes. When at length they tried to explain the matter to each other, crying out, "Look there; no, there!" each of them suddenly perceived the other's phantom, and the water round the boat appeared all alive with ghastly monsters. The cry which burst from every mouth awakened Undine. Before the light of her beaming eyes the horde of misshapen faces vanished. But Huldbrand was quite exasperated by these fiendish tricks and would have burst into loud imprecations, had not Undine whispered in the most beseeching manner, "For God's sake, my own lord, be patient now; remember we are on the water." The Knight kept down his anger, and soon sank into thought. Presently Undine whispered to him: "My love, had not we better give up the foolish journey, and go home to Ringstetten in comfort?" But Huldbrand muttered angrily, "Then I am to be kept a prisoner in my own castle? and even there I may not breathe freely unless the fountain is sealed up? Would to Heaven the absurd connection"—But Undine pressed her soft hand gently upon his lips. And he held his peace, and mused upon all she had previously told him.

In the meantime, Bertalda had yielded herself up to many and strange reflections. She knew something of Undine's origin, but not all! and Kühleborn in particular was only a fearful but vague image in her mind; she had not even once heard his name. And as she pondered these wonderful subjects, she half unconsciously took off a golden necklace which Huldbrand had bought for her of a travelling jeweller a few days before; she held it close to the

surface of the river playing with it, and dreamily watching the golden gleam that it shed on the glassy water Suddenly a large hand came up out of the Danube, snatched the necklace, and ducked under with it. Bertalda screamed aloud, and was answered by a laugh of scorn from the depths below. And now the Knight could contain himself no longer. Starting up, he gave loose to his fury, loading with imprecations those who chose to break into his family and private life, and challenging them—were they goblins or sirens—to meet his good sword. Bertalda continued to weep over the loss of her beloved jewel, and her tears were as oil to the flames of his wrath while Undine kept her hand dipped into the water with a ceaseless low murmur, only once or twice interrupting her mysterious whispers, to say to her husband in tones of entreaty, "Dearest love, speak not roughly to me here; say whatever you will, only spare me here: you know why!" and he still restrained his tongue (which stammered with passion) from saying a word directly against her. She soon drew her hand from under the water, bringing up a beautiful coral necklace whose glitter dazzled them all. "Take it," said she, offering it kindly to Bertalda; "I have sent for this, instead of the one you lost; do not grieve any more, my poor child." But Huldbrand darted forward, snatched the shining gift from Undine's hand, hurled it again into the water, and roared furiously, "So you still have intercourse with them? In the name of sorcery, go back to them with all your baubles, and leave us men in peace, witch as you are!" With eyes aghast, yet streaming with tears, poor Undine gazed at him, still holding out the hand which had so lovingly presented to Bertalda the bright jewel. Then she wept more and more, like a sorely injured, innocent child. And at length she said faintly, "Farewell, my dearest;

farewell! They shall not lay a finger on thee; only be true to me, that I may still guard thee from them. But I, alas! I must be gone; all this bright morning of life is over. Woe, woe is me! what hast thou done? woe, woe!" And she slipped out of the boat and passed away. Whether she went down into the river, or flowed away with it, none could tell; it was like both and yet like neither. She soon mingled with the waters of the Danube, and nothing was to be heard but the sobbing whispers of the stream as it washed against the boat, seeming to say distinctly, "Woe, woe! Oh be true to me! woe, woe!"

Huldbrand lay flat in the boat, drowned in tears, till a deep swoon came to the unhappy man's relief, and steeped him in oblivion.

XVI.—OF WHAT BEFELL HULDBRAND AFTERWARDS

Shall we say, Alas, or thank God, that our grief is so often transient? I speak of such grief as has its source in the well-springs of life itself, and seems so identified with our lost friend, as almost to fill up the void he has left; and his hallowed image seems fixed within the sanctuary of our soul, until the signal of our release comes, and sets us free to join him! In truth, a good man will not suffer this sanctuary to be disturbed; yet even with him, it is not the first, the all-engrossing sorrow which abides. New objects will intermingle, and we are compelled to draw from our grief itself a fresh proof of the perishableness of earthly things: alas, then, that our grief is transient!

So it was with the Lord of Ringstetten; whether for his weal or woe, the sequel of this story will show us. At first, he could do nothing but weep abundantly, as his poor kind Undine had wept when he snatched from her the beautiful gift, which she thought would have comforted and pleased

them so much. He would then stretch out his hand as she had done, and burst into tears afresh, like her. He secretly hoped that he might end by altogether dissolving in tears: and are there not many whose minds have been visited by the same painfully pleasing thought, at some season of great sorrow? Bertalda wept with him, and they lived quietly together at Ringstetten a long while, cherishing the memory of Undine, and seeming to have forgotten their own previous attachment. Moreover, the gentle Undine often appeared to Huldbrand in his dreams; she would caress him meekly and fondly, and depart again with tearful resignation, so that when he awoke, he doubted whose tears they were that bedewed his face—were they hers, or only his own?

But as time went on these visions became less frequent, and the Knight's grief milder; still he might perhaps have spent the rest of his days contentedly, devoting himself to the memory of Undine, and keeping it alive by talking of her, had not the old Fisherman unexpectedly made his appearance, and laid his serious commands upon Bertalda, his daughter, to return home with him. The news of Undine's disappearance had reached him, and he would no longer suffer Bertalda to remain in the castle alone with its lord. "I do not ask whether my daughter cares for me or not," said he; "her character is at stake, and where that is the case, nothing else is worth considering."

This summons from the old man, and the prospect of utter loneliness amid the halls and long galleries of the castle after Bertalda's departure, revived in Huldbrand's heart the feeling that had lain dormant, and as it were buried under his mourning for Undine, namely, his love for the fair Bertalda. The Fisherman had many objections to their marriage; Undine had been very dear to the old man and he thought it hardly certain yet that his lost darling

was really dead. But, if her corpse were indeed lying stiff and cold in the bed of the Danube, or floating down its stream to the distant ocean, then Bertalda ought to reproach herself for her death, and it ill became her to take the place of her poor victim. However, the Fisherman was very fond of Huldbrand also, the entreaties of his daughter, who was now grown much more gentle and submissive, had their effect, and it seems that he did yield his consent at last; for he remained peaceably at the castle, and an express was sent for Father Heilmann, who in earlier, happier days had blessed Undine's and Huldbrand's union, that he might officiate at the Knight's second marriage.

No sooner had the holy man read the Lord of Ringstetten's letter than he set forth on his way thither, with far greater speed than the messenger had used to reach him. If his straining haste took away his breath, or he felt his aged limbs ache with fatigue, he would say to himself: "I may be in time to prevent a wicked deed; sink not till thou hast reached the goal, my withered frame!" And so he exerted himself afresh, and pushed on, without flagging or halting, till late one evening he entered the shady court of Ringstetten.

The lovers were sitting hand in hand under a tree, with the thoughtful old man near them; as soon as they saw Father Heilmann, they rose eagerly and advanced to meet him. But he, scarcely noticing their civilities, begged the Knight to come with him into the castle. As he stared at this request, and hesitated to comply, the pious old Priest said, "Why, indeed, should I speak to you alone, my Lord of Ringstetten? What I have to say equally concerns the Fisherman and Bertalda; and as they must sooner or later know it, it had better be said now. How can you be certain, Lord Huldbrand, that your own wife is indeed dead? For myself, I can hardly think so. I will not venture to

speak of things relating to her wondrous nature; in truth I have no clear knowledge about it. But a godly and faithful wife she proved herself, beyond all about. And these fourteen nights has she come to my bedside in dreams, wringing her poor hands in anguish, and sighing out, 'Oh stop him, dear father! I am yet alive! Oh save his life! Oh save his soul!' I understood not the meaning of the vision till your messenger came; and I have now hastened hither, not to join but to part those hands, which may not be united in holy wedlock. Part from her, Huldbrand! Part from him, Bertalda! He belongs to another; see you not how his cheek turns pale at the thought of his departed wife? Those are not the looks of a bridegroom, and the spirit tells me this. If thou leavest him not now, there is joy for thee no more." They all three felt at the bottom of their hearts that Father Heilmann's words were true but they would not yield to them. Even the old Fisherman was so blinded as to think that what had been settled between them for so many days, could not now be relinquished. So they resisted the Priest's warnings, and urged the fulfilment of their wishes with headlong, gloomy determination, till Father Heilmann departed with a melancholy shake of the head, without accepting even for one night their proffered hospitalities, or tasting any of the refreshments they set before him. But Huldbrand persuaded himself that the old Priest was a weak dotard; and early next morning he sent to a monk from the nearest cloister, who readily promised to come and marry them in a few days.

XVII.—THE KNIGHT'S DREAM

The morning twilight was beginning to dawn, and the Knight lay half-awake on his couch. Whenever he dropped asleep he was scared by mysterious terrors, and started up

as if sleep were peopled by phantoms. If he woke up in earnest, he felt himself fanned all around by what seemed like swans' wings, and soothed by watery airs, which lulled him back again into the half-unconscious, twilight state. At length he did fall asleep and fancied himself lifted by swans on their soft wings, and carried far away over lands and seas, all to the sound of their sweetest melody. "Swans singing! swans singing!" thought he continually; "is not that the strain of Death?" Presently he found himself hovering above a vast sea. A swan warbled in his ear that it was the Mediterranean; and as he looked down into the deep it became like clear crystal, transparent to the bottom. This rejoiced him much, for he could see Undine sitting in a brilliant hall of crystal.

She was shedding tears, indeed, and looked sadly changed since the happy times which they had spent together at Ringstetten; happiest at first, but happy also a short time since, just before the fatal sail on the Danube. The contrast struck Huldbrand deeply; but Undine did not seem to be aware of his presence. Kühleborn soon came up to her, and began rating her for weeping. She composed herself, and looked at him with a firmness and dignity, before which he almost quailed. "Though I am condemned to live under these deep waters," said she, "I have brought my soul with me; therefore my tears cannot be understood by thee. But to me they are blessings, like everything that belongs to a loving soul." He shook his head incredulously, and said, after a pause: "Nevertheless, niece, you are still subject to the laws of our element; and you know you must execute sentence of death upon him as soon as he marries again, and breaks faith with you." —"To this hour he is a widower," said Undine, "and loves and mourns me truly."—"Ah, but he will be bridegroom

soon," said Kühleborn with a sneer; "wait a couple of days only, and the marriage blessing will have been given, and you must go up and put the criminal to death."—"I cannot!" answered the smiling Undine. "I have had the fountain sealed up, against myself and my whole race." "But suppose he leaves his castle," said Kühleborn, "or forgets himself so far as to let them set the fountain 'free,' for he thinks mighty little of those matters."—"And that is why," said Undine, still smiling through her tears, "that is why his spirit hovers at this moment over the Mediterranean, and listens to our conversation as in a dream. I have contrived it on purpose, that he may take warning." On hearing this Kühleborn looked up angrily at the Knight, scowled at him, stamped, and then shot upward through the waves like an arrow. His fury seemed to make him expand into a whale. Again the swans began to warble, to wave their wings, and to fly; the Knight felt himself borne high over alps and rivers, till he was deposited in the Castle of Ringstetten, and awoke in his bed.

He did awake in his bed, just as one of his squires entered the room, and told him that Father Heilmann was still lingering near the castle; for he had found him the evening before in the forest, living in a shed he had made for himself with branches and moss. On being asked what he was staying for since he had refused to bless the betrothed couple? He answered, "It is not the wedded only who stand in need of prayer, and though I came not for the bridal, there may yet be work for me of another kind. We must be prepared for everything. Sometimes marriage and mourning are not so far apart; and he who does not wilfully close his eyes may perceive it." The Knight built all manner of strange conjectures upon

these words, and upon his dream. But if once a man has formed a settled purpose, it is hard indeed to shake it. The end of this was, that their plans remained unchanged.

XVIII.—OF THE KNIGHT HULDBRAND'S SECOND BRIDAL

Were I to tell you how the wedding-day at Ringstetten passed, you might imagine yourself contemplating a glittering heap of gay objects, with a black crape thrown over them, through which the splendid pageant, instead of delighting the eye, would look like a mockery of all earthly joys. Not that the festive meeting was disturbed by any spectral apparitions: we have seen that the castle was safe from any intrusion of the malicious water-sprites. But the Knight, the Fisherman, and all the guests were haunted by a feeling that the chief person, the soul of the feast, was missing; and who was she but the gentle, beloved Undine? As often as they heard a door open, every eye turned involuntarily toward it, and when nothing ensued but the entrance of the steward with some more dishes, or of the cupbearer with a fresh supply of rich wine, the guests would look sad and blank, and the sparks of gayety kindled by the light jest or the cheerful discourse, were quenched in the damp of melancholy recollections. The bride was the most thoughtless, and consequently the most cheerful person present; but even she, at moments, felt it unnatural to be sitting at the head of the table, decked out in her wreath of green and her embroidery of gold, while Undine's corpse was lying cold and stiff in the bed of the Danube, or floating down its stream to the ocean. For, ever since her father had used these words, they had been ringing in her

ears, and to-day especially they pursued her without ceasing.

The party broke up before night had closed in; not, as usual, dispersed by the eager impatience of the bridegroom to be alone with his bride; but dropping off listlessly, as a general gloom spread over the assembly; Bertalda was followed to her dressing-room by her women only, and the Knight by his pages. At this gloomy feast, there was no question of the gay and sportive train of bridesmaids and young men, who usually attend the wedded pair.

Bertalda tried to call up brighter thoughts; she bade her women display before her a splendid set of jewels, the gift of Huldbrand, together with her richest robes and veils, that she might select the gayest and handsomest dress for the morrow. Her maids seized the opportunity of wishing their young mistress all manner of joy, nor did they fail to extol the beauty of the bride to the skies. Bertalda, however, glanced at herself in the glass, and sighed: "Ah, but look at the freckles just here, on my throat!" They looked and found it was indeed so, but called them beauty spots that would only enhance the fairness of her delicate skin. Bertalda shook her head, and replied, "Still it is a blemish, and I once might have cured it!" said she with a deep sigh. "But the fountain in the court is stopped up—that fountain which used to supply me with precious, beautifying water. If I could but get one jugful to-day!"—"Is that all?" cried an obsequious attendant, and slipped out of the room. "Why, she will not be so mad," asked Bertalda in a tone of complacent surprise, "as to make them raise the stone this very night?" And now she heard men's footsteps crossing the court; and on looking down from her window, she saw the officious handmaid conducting them straight to the fountain; they carried levers and

other tools upon their shoulders. "Well, it is my will to be sure," said Bertalda, smiling, "provided they are not too long about it." And, elated by the thought that a hint from her could now effect what had once been denied to her entreaties, she watched the progress of the work in the moonlit court below.

The men began straining themselves to lift the huge stone; occasionally a sigh was heard, as someone recollected that they were now reversing their dear lady's commands. But the task proved lighter than they had expected. Some power from beneath seemed to second their efforts, and help the stone upward. "Why!" said the astonished workmen to each other, "it feels as if the spring below had turned into a waterspout." More and more did the stone heave, till, without any impulse from the men it rolled heavily along the pavement with a hollow sound. But, from the mouth of the spring arose, slowly and solemnly, what looked like a column of water; at first they thought so, but presently saw that it was no waterspout, but the figure of a pale woman, veiled in white. She was weeping abundantly, wringing her hands and clasping them over her head, while she proceeded with slow and measured step toward the castle. The crowd of servants fell back from the spot; while, pale and aghast, the bride and her women looked on from the window.

When the figure had arrived just under that window, she raised her tearful face for a moment, and Bertalda thought she recognised Undine's pale features through the veil. The shadowy form moved on slowly and reluctantly, like one sent to execution. Bertalda screamed out that the Knight must be called; no one durst stir a foot, and the bride herself kept silence, frightened at the sound of her own voice.

While these remained at the window, as if rooted to the spot, the mysterious visitor had entered the castle, and passed up the well-known stairs, and through the familiar rooms, still weeping silently. Alas! how differently had she trodden those floors in days gone by!

The Knight had now dismissed his train; half-undressed, and in a dejected mood, he was standing near a large mirror, by the light of a dim taper. He heard the door tapped by a soft, soft touch. It was thus Undine had been wont to knock, when she meant to steal upon him playfully. "It is all fancy!" thought he. "The bridal bed awaits me." —"Yes, but it is a cold one," said a weeping voice from without; and the mirror then showed him the door opening slowly, and the white form coming in, and closing the door gently behind her. "They have opened the mouth of the spring," murmured she; "and now I am come, and now must thou die." His beating heart told him this was indeed true; but he pressed his hands over his eyes, and said: "Do not bewilder me with terror in my last moments. If thy veil conceals the features of a spectre, hide them from me still, and let me die in peace."—"Alas!" rejoined the forlorn one, "wilt thou not look upon me once again? I am fair, as when thou didst woo me on the promontory."— "Oh, could that be true" sighed! Huldbrand, "and if I might die in thy embrace!"—"Be it so, my dearest," said she. And she raised her veil, and the heavenly radiance of her sweet countenance beamed upon him.

Trembling, at once with love and awe, the Knight approached her; she received him with a tender embrace; but instead of relaxing her hold, she pressed him more closely to her heart, and wept as if her soul would pour itself out. Drowned in her tears and his own, Huldbrand felt

his heart sink within him, and at last he fell lifeless from the fond arms of Undine upon his pillow.

"I have wept him to death!" said she to the pages, whom she passed in the ante-chamber; and she glided slowly through the crowd, and went back to the fountain.

XIX.—HOW THE KNIGHT HULDBRAND WAS INTERRED

Father Heilmann had returned to the castle, as soon as he heard of the Lord of Ringstetten's death, and he appeared there just after the monk, who had married the hapless pair, had fled full of alarm and horror. "It is well," answered Heilmann, when told this: "now is the time for my office; I want no assistant." He addressed spiritual exhortations to the widowed bride, but little impression could be made on so worldly and thoughtless a mind. The old Fisherman, although grieved to the heart, resigned himself more readily to the awful dispensation; and when Bertalda kept calling Undine a witch and a murderer, the old man calmly answered: "The stroke could not be turned away. For my part, I see only the hand of God therein; and none grieved more deeply over Huldbrand's sentence, than she who was doomed to inflict it, the poor forsaken Undine!" And he helped to arrange the funeral ceremonies in a manner suitable to the high rank of the dead. He was to be buried in a neighbouring hamlet, whose churchyard contained the graves of all his ancestors, and which he had himself enriched with many noble gifts. His helmet and coat of arms lay upon the coffin, about to be lowered into earth with his mortal remains; for Lord Huldbrand of Ringstetten was the last of his race.

The mourners began their dismal procession, and the sound of their solemn dirge rose into the calm blue depths of heaven. Heilmann walked first, bearing on high a crucifix,

and the bereaved Bertalda followed leaning on her aged father. Suddenly, amid the crowd of mourners who composed the widow's train, appeared a snow-white figure, deeply veiled, with hands uplifted in an attitude of intense grief. Those that stood near her felt a shudder creep over them; they shrank back, and thus increased the alarm of those whom the stranger next approached, so that confusion gradually spread itself through the whole train. Here and there was to be found a soldier bold enough to address the figure, and attempt to drive her away; but she always eluded their grasp, and the next moment reappeared among the rest, moving along with slow and solemn step. At length, when the attendants had all fallen back, she found herself close behind Bertalda, and now slackened her pace to the very slowest measure, so that the widow was not aware of her presence. No one disturbed her again, while she meekly and reverently glided on behind her.

So they advanced till they reached the churchyard, when the whole procession formed a circle round the open grave. Bertalda then discovered the unbidden guest, and half-angry, half-frightened, she forbade her to come near the Knight's resting-place. But the veiled form gently shook her head, and extended her hands in humble entreaty; this gesture reminded Bertalda of poor Undine, when she gave her the coral necklace on the Danube, and she could not but weep. Father Heilmann enjoined silence; for they had begun to heap earth over the grave, and were about to offer up solemn prayers around it. Bertalda knelt down in silence, and all her followers did the same. When they rose, lo, the white form had vanished! and on the spot where she had knelt, a bright silvery brook now gushed out of the turf, and flowed round the Knight's tomb, till it had almost wholly encircled it; then it ran further on,

and emptied itself into a shady pool which bounded one side of the churchyard. From that time forth, the villagers are said to have shown travellers this clear spring, and they still believe it to be the poor forsaken Undine, who continues thus to twine her arms round her beloved lord.

V

THE STORY OF RUTH

IT CAME to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab—he and his wife and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other was Ruth. And they dwelled there about ten years.

And Mahlon and Chilion died also, both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband. Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab; for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each to her mother's house. The Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them.

And they lifted up their voice and wept; and they said unto her, "Surely, we will return with thee unto thy people."

And Naomi said, "Turn again, my daughters; why will ye go with me? Turn again, my daughters, go your way."

And they lifted up their voice and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her.

And she said, "Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people and unto her gods! Return thou after thy sister-in-law."

And Ruth said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee. For whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

When Naomi saw that Ruth was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her. So they two went until they came to Bethlehem.

And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, "Is this Naomi?"

And she said unto them, "Call me not Naomi [pleasant], call me Mara [bitter]; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty. Why then call ye me Naomi, seeing that the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?"

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab; and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley-harvest.

And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech, and his name was Boaz.

And Ruth said unto Naomi: "Let me now go to the field and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace."

And Naomi said unto her, "Go, my daughter."

And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers; and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said unto the reapers, "The Lord be with you!"

And they answered him, "The Lord bless thee!"

Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, "Whose damsel is this?"

And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, "It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab. And she said, 'I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.' So she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house."

Then said Boaz unto Ruth, "Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens; let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them. Have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? And when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn."

Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?"

And Boaz answered and said unto her, "It hath fully been showed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law, since the death of thine husband; and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."

Then she said, "Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens."

And Boaz said unto her at meal-time, "Come thou hither, and eat of the bread and dip thy morsel in the vinegar."

And she sat beside the reapers, and he reached her parched corn; and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.

And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not; and let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them that she may glean them, and rebuke her not."

So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. And she took it up and went into the city; and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned, and she brought forth and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.

And her mother-in-law said unto her, "Where hast thou gleaned to-day, and where wroughtest thou? Blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee!"

And she showed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought, and said, "The man's name with whom I wrought to-day is Boaz."

And Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. The man is near of kin unto us; one of our next kinsmen."

And Ruth the Moabitess said, "He said unto me also, 'Thou shalt keep fast by my young men until they have ended all my harvest.' "

And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field."

So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley-harvest and of wheat-harvest, and dwelt with her mother-in-law.

Then Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her, "My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor. Wash thyself, therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor; but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie; and thou shalt go in and uncover his feet and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do."

And Ruth said unto her, "All that thou sayest unto me I will do." And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her.

And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn. And she came softly and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was

afraid, and turned himself; and behold! a woman lay at his feet. And he said, "Who art thou?"

And she answered, "I am Ruth, thine handmaid. Spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman."

And he said, "Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter; for thou hast showed more kindness in the latter end than in the beginning; inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest; for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman. And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman; howbeit, there is a kinsman nearer than I. Tarry this night, and it shall be, in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part; but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the Lord liveth. Lie down until the morning."

And she lay at his feet until the morning. And she rose up before one could know another.

And he said, "Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor." Also he said, "Bring the veil that thou hast upon thee and hold it."

And when she held it he measured six measures of barley and laid it on her.

And she went into the city, and when she came to her mother-in-law she said, "Who art thou, my daughter?"

And she told her all that the man had done to her; and she said, "These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, 'Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law.' "

Then Naomi said, "Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall; for the man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day."

Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there. And, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by, unto whom he said, "Ho, such a one! turn aside. sit down here."

And he turned aside, and sat down.

And Boaz took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit ye down here."

And they sat down.

And he said unto the kinsman, "Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land which was our brother Elimelech's; and I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it; but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is none to redeem it beside thee, and I am after thee."

And he said, "I will redeem it."

Then said Boaz, "What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance."

And the kinsman said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance. Redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it."

Now this was the manner in former time in Israel, concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things: a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour; and this was a testimony in Israel. Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz:

"Buy it for thee." So he drew off his shoe.

And Boaz said unto the elders and unto all the people, "Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's.

at the hand of Naomi. Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day."

And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said: "We are witnesses. The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel; and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem; and let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman."

So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife.

And Ruth bare a son. And the women said unto Naomi, "Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him."

And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. And the women, her neighbours, gave it a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi"; and they called his name Obed.

VI

THE GREAT STONE FACE

ONE afternoon, when the sun was going down, a mother and her little boy sat at the door of their cottage, talking about the Great Stone Face. They had but to lift their eyes, and there it was plainly to be seen, though miles away, with the sunshine brightening all its features.

And what was the Great Stone Face?

Embosomed amongst a family of lofty mountains, there was a valley so spacious that it contained many thousand inhabitants. Some of these good people dwelt in log-huts, with the black forest all around them, on the steep and difficult hillsides. Others had their homes in comfortable farmhouses, and cultivated the rich soil on the gentle slopes or level surfaces of the valley. Others, again, were congregated into populous villages, where some wild, highland rivulet, tumbling down from its birthplace in the upper mountain region, had been caught and tamed by human cunning, and compelled to turn the machinery of cotton-factories. The inhabitants of this valley, in short, were numerous, and of many modes of life. But all of them, grown people and children, had a kind of familiarity with the Great Stone Face, although some possessed the gift of distinguishing this grand natural phenomenon more perfectly than many of their neighbours. The Great Stone Face, then, was a work of Nature in her mood of majestic playfulness, formed on the perpendicular side of a mountain by some immense rocks, which had been thrown together

in such a position as, when viewed at a proper distance, precisely to resemble the features of the human countenance. It seemed as if an enormous giant, or a Titan, had sculptured his own likeness on the precipice. There was the broad arch of the forehead, a hundred feet in height; the nose, with its long bridge; and the vast lips, which, if they could have spoken, would have rolled their thunder accents from one end of the valley to the other. True it is, that if the spectator approached too near, he lost the outline of the gigantic visage, and could discern only a heap of ponderous and gigantic rocks, piled in chaotic ruin one upon another. Retracing his steps, however, the wondrous features would again be seen; and the farther he withdrew from them, the more like a human face, with all its original divinity intact, did they appear; until, as it grew dim in the distance, with the clouds and glorified vapour of the mountains clustering about it, the Great Stone Face seemed positively to be alive.

It was a happy lot for children to grow up to manhood or womanhood with the Great Stone Face before their eyes, for all the features were noble, and the expression was at once grand and sweet, as if it were the glow of a vast, warm heart, that embraced all mankind in its affections, and had room for more. It was an education only to look at it. According to the belief of many people, the valley owed much of its fertility to this benign aspect that was continually beaming over it, illuminating the clouds, and infusing its tenderness into the sunshine.

As we began with saying, a mother and her little boy sat at their cottage-door, gazing at the Great Stone Face, and talking about it. The child's name was Ernest.

"Mother," said he, while the Titanic visage smiled on him, "I wish that it could speak, for it looks so very kindly

that its voice must needs be pleasant. If I were to see a man with such a face, I should love him dearly."

"If an old prophecy should come to pass," answered his mother, "we may see a man, some time or other, with exactly such a face as that."

"What prophecy do you mean, dear mother?" eagerly inquired Ernest. "Pray tell me all about it!"

So his mother told him a story that her own mother had told to her, when she herself was younger than little Ernest; a story, not of things that were past, but of what was yet to come; a story, nevertheless, so very old, that even the Indians, who formerly inhabited this valley, had heard it from their forefathers, to whom, as they affirmed, it had been murmured by the mountain streams, and whispered by the wind among the tree-tops. The purport was, that, at some future day, a child should be born hereabouts, who was destined to become the greatest and noblest personage of his time, and whose countenance, in manhood, should bear an exact resemblance to the Great Stone Face. Not a few old-fashioned people, and young ones likewise, in the ardour of their hopes, still cherished an enduring faith in this old prophecy. But others who had seen more of the world had watched and waited till they were weary, and had beheld no man with such a face, nor any man that proved to be much greater or nobler than his neighbours, concluded it to be nothing but an idle tale. At all events, the great man of the prophecy had not yet appeared.

"O mother, dear mother!" cried Ernest, clapping his hands above his head, "I do hope that I shall live to see him!"

His mother was an affectionate and thoughtful woman, and felt that it was wisest not to discourage the generous hopes of her little boy. So she only said to him, "Perhaps you may."

And Ernest never forgot the story that his mother told him. It was always in his mind, whenever he looked upon the Great Stone Face. He spent his childhood in the log-cottage where he was born, and was dutiful to his mother, and helpful to her in many things, assisting her much with his little hands, and more with his loving heart. In this manner, from a happy yet often pensive child, he grew up to be a mild, quiet, unobtrusive boy, and sun-browned with labour in the fields, but with more intelligence brightening his aspect than is seen in many lads who have been taught at famous schools. Yet Ernest had had no teacher, save only that the Great Stone Face became one to him. When the toil of the day was over, he would gaze at it for hours, until he began to imagine that those vast features recognised him, and gave him a smile of kindness and encouragement, responsive to his own look of veneration. We must not take upon us to affirm that this was a mistake, although the Face may have looked no more kindly at Ernest than at all the world beside. But the secret was, that the boy's tender and confiding simplicity discerned what other people could not see; and thus the love, which was meant for all, became his peculiar portion.

About this time, there went a rumour throughout the valley, that the great man, foretold from ages long ago, who was to bear a resemblance to the Great Stone Face, had appeared at last. It seems that, many years before, a young man had migrated from the valley and settled at a distant seaport, where, after getting together a little money, he had set up as a shopkeeper. His name—but I could never learn whether it was his real one, or a nickname that had grown out of his habits and success in life—was Gathergold. Being shrewd and active, and endowed by Providence with that inscrutable faculty which develops itself in what the world

calls luck, he became an exceedingly rich merchant, and owner of a whole fleet of bulky-bottomed ships. All the countries of the globe appeared to join hands for the mere purpose of adding heap after heap to the mountainous accumulation of this one man's wealth. The cold regions of the north, almost within the gloom and shadow of the Arctic Circle, sent him their tribute in the shape of furs; hot Africa sifted for him the golden sands of her rivers, and gathered up the ivory tusks of her great elephants out of the forests; the East came bringing him the rich shawls, and spices, and teas, and the effulgence of diamonds, and the gleaming purity of large pearls. The ocean, not to be behindhand with the earth, yielded up her mighty whales, that Mr. Gathergold might sell their oil, and make a profit on it. Be the original commodity what it might, it was gold within his grasp. It might be said of him, as of Midas in the fable, that whatever he touched with his finger immediately glistened, and grew yellow, and was changed at once into sterling metal, or, which suited him still better, into piles of coin. And, when Mr. Gathergold had become so very rich that it would have taken him a hundred years only to count his wealth, he bethought himself of his native valley, and resolved to go back thither, and end his days where he was born. With this purpose in view, he sent a skilful architect to build him such a palace as should be fit for a man of his vast wealth to live in.

As I have said above, it had already been rumoured in the valley that Mr. Gathergold had turned out to be the prophetic personage so long and vainly looked for, and that his visage was the perfect and undeniable similitude of the Great Stone Face. People were the more ready to believe that this must needs be the fact, when they beheld the splendid edifice that rose, as if by enchantment, on the site

of his father's old weather-beaten farmhouse. The exterior was of marble, so dazzlingly white that it seemed as though the whole structure might melt away in the sunshine, like those humbler ones which Mr. Gathergold, in his young play-days, before his fingers were gifted with the touch of transmutation, had been accustomed to build of snow. It had a richly ornamented portico, supported by tall pillars, beneath which was a lofty door, studded with silver knobs, and made of a kind of variegated wood that had been brought from beyond the sea. The windows, from the floor to the ceiling of each stately apartment, were composed, respectively, of but one enormous pane of glass, so transparently pure that it was said to be a finer medium than even the vacant atmosphere. Hardly anybody had been permitted to see the interior of this palace; but it was reported, and with good semblance of truth, to be far more gorgeous than the outside, insomuch that whatever was iron or brass in other houses was silver or gold in this; and Mr. Gathergold's bedchamber, especially, made such a glittering appearance that no ordinary man would have been able to close his eyes there. But, on the other hand, Mr. Gathergold was now so inured to wealth, that perhaps he could not have closed his eyes unless where the gleam of it was certain to find its way beneath his eyelids.

In due time, the mansion was finished; next came the upholsterers, with magnificent furniture; then, a whole troop of black and white servants, the harbingers of Mr. Gathergold, who, in his own majestic person, was expected to arrive at sunset. Our friend Ernest, meanwhile, had been deeply stirred by the idea that the great man, the noble man, the man of prophecy, after so many ages of delay, was at length to be made manifest to his native valley. He knew, boy as he was, that there were a thousand ways in which Mr.

Gathergold, with his vast wealth, might transform himself into an angel of beneficence, and assume a control over human affairs as wide and benignant as the smile of the Great Stone Face. Full of faith and hope, Ernest doubted not that what the people said was true, and that now he was to behold the living likeness of those wondrous features on the mountain-side. While the boy was still gazing up the valley, and fancying, as he always did, that the Great Stone Face returned his gaze and looked kindly at him, the rumbling of wheels was heard, approaching swiftly along the winding road.

"Here he comes!" cried a group of people who were assembled to witness the arrival. "Here comes the great Mr. Gathergold!"

A carriage, drawn by four horses, dashed round the turn of the road. Within it, thrust partly out of the window, appeared the physiognomy of a little old man, with a skin as yellow as if his own Midas-hand had transmuted it. He had a low forehead, small, sharp eyes, puckered about with innumerable wrinkles, and very thin lips, which he made still thinner by pressing them forcibly together.

"The very image of the Great Stone Face!" shouted the people. "Sure enough, the old prophecy is true; and here we have the great man come, at last!"

And, what greatly perplexed Ernest, they seemed actually to believe that here was the likeness which they spoke of. By the roadside there chanced to be an old beggar-woman and two little beggar-children, stragglers from some far-off region, who, as the carriage rolled onward, held out their hands and lifted up their doleful voices, most piteously beseeching charity. A yellow claw—the very same that had clawed together so much wealth—poked itself out of the coach-window, and dropt some copper coins upon the

ground; so that, though the great man's name seems to have been Gathergold, he might just as suitably have been nicknamed Scattercopper. Still, nevertheless, with an earnest shout, and evidently with as much good faith as ever, the people bellowed:

"He is the very image of the Great Stone Face!"

But Ernest turned sadly from the wrinkled shrewdness of that sordid visage, and gazed up the valley, where, amid a gathering mist, gilded by the last sunbeams, he could still distinguish those glorious features which had impressed themselves into his soul. Their aspect cheered him. What did the benign lips seem to say?

"He will come! Fear not, Ernest; the man will come!"

The years went on, and Ernest ceased to be a boy. He had grown to be a young man now. He attracted little notice from the other inhabitants of the valley; for they saw nothing remarkable in his way of life, save that, when the labour of the day was over, he still loved to go apart and gaze and meditate upon the Great Stone Face. According to their idea of the matter, it was a folly, indeed, but pardonable, inasmuch as Ernest was industrious, kind, and neighbourly, and neglected no duty for the sake of indulging this idle habit. They knew not that the Great Stone Face had become a teacher to him, and that the sentiment which was expressed in it would enlarge the young man's heart, and fill it with wider and deeper sympathies than other hearts. They knew not that thence would come a better wisdom than could be learned from books, and a better life than could be moulded on the defaced example of other human lives. Neither did Ernest know that the thoughts and affections which came to him so naturally, in the fields and at the fireside, and wherever he communed with himself, were of a higher tone than those which all men shared with

him. A simple soul—simple as when his mother first taught him the old prophecy—he beheld the marvellous features beaming adown the valley, and still wondered that their human counterpart was so long in making his appearance.

By this time poor Mr. Gathergold was dead and buried; and the oddest part of the matter was, that his wealth which was the body and spirit of his existence, had disappeared before his death, leaving nothing of him but a living skeleton, covered over with a wrinkled, yellow skin. Since the melting away of his gold, it had been very generally conceded that there was no such striking resemblance, after all, betwixt the ignoble features of the ruined merchant and that majestic face upon the mountain-side. So the people ceased to honour him during his lifetime, and quietly consigned him to forgetfulness after his decease. Once in a while, it is true, his memory was brought up in connection with the magnificent palace which he had built, and which had long ago been turned into a hotel for the accommodation of strangers, multitudes of whom came, every summer, to visit that famous natural curiosity, the Great Stone Face. Thus, Mr. Gathergold being discredited and thrown into the shade, the man of prophecy was yet to come.

It so happened that a native-born son of the valley, many years before, had enlisted as a soldier, and, after a great deal of hard fighting, had now become an illustrious commander. Whatever he may be called in history, he was known in camps and on the battle-field under the nickname of Old Blood-and-Thunder. This war-worn veteran, being now infirm with age and wounds, and weary of the turmoil of a military life, and of the roll of the drum and the clangour of the trumpet, that had so long been ringing in his ears, had lately signified a purpose of returning to his native valley,

hoping to find repose where he remembered to have left it. The inhabitants, his old neighbours and their grown-up children, were resolved to welcome the renowned warrior with a salute of cannon and a public dinner; and all the more enthusiastically, it being affirmed that now, at last, the likeness of the Great Stone Face had actually appeared. An aide-de-camp of Old Blood-and-Thunder, travelling through the valley, was said to have been struck with the resemblance. Moreover the schoolmates and early acquaintances of the general were ready to testify, on oath, that, to the best of their recollection, the aforesaid general had been exceedingly like the majestic image, even when a boy, only that the idea had never occurred to them at that period. Great, therefore, was the excitement throughout the valley; and many people, who had never once thought of glancing at the Great Stone Face for years before, now spent their time in gazing at it, for the sake of knowing exactly how General Blood-and-Thunder looked.

On the day of the great festival, Ernest, with all the other people of the valley, left their work, and proceeded to the spot where the sylvan banquet was prepared. As he approached, the loud voice of the Rev. Dr. Battleblast was heard, beseeching a blessing on the good things set before them, and on the distinguished friend of peace in whose honour they were assembled. The tables were arranged in a cleared space of the woods, shut in by the surrounding trees, except where a vista opened eastward, and afforded a distant view of the Great Stone Face. Over the general's chair, which was a relic from the home of Washington, there was an arch of verdant boughs, with the laurel profusely intermixed, and surmounted by his country's banner, beneath which he had won his victories. Our friend Ernest raised himself on his tiptoes, in hopes to get a glimpse of the

celebrated guest; but there was a mighty crowd about the tables anxious to hear the toasts and speeches, and to catch any word that might fall from the general in reply; and a volunteer company, doing duty as a guard, pricked ruthlessly with their bayonets at any particularly quiet person among the throng. So Ernest, being of an unobtrusive character was thrust quite into the background, where he could see no more of Old Blood-and-Thunder's physiognomy than if it had been still blazing on the battle-field. To console himself, he turned towards the Great Stone Face, which, like a faithful and long-remembered friend, looked back and smiled upon him through the vista of the forest. Meantime, however, he could overhear the remarks of various individuals, who were comparing the features of the hero with the face on the distant mountain-side.

"'Tis the same face, to a hair!" cried one man, cutting a caper for joy.

"Wonderfully like, that's a fact!" responded another.

"Like! why, I call it Old Blood-and-Thunder himself, in a monstrous looking-glass!" cried a third. "And why not? He's the greatest man of this or any other age, beyond a doubt."

And then all three of the speakers gave a great shout, which communicated electricity to the crowd, and called forth a roar from a thousand voices, that went reverberating for miles among the mountains, until you might have supposed that the Great Stone Face had poured its thunder-breath into the cry. All these comments, and this vast enthusiasm, served the more to interest our friend; nor did he think of questioning that now, at length, the mountain-visage had found its human counterpart. It is true, Ernest had imagined that this long-looked-for personage would appear in the character of a man of peace, uttering wisdom,

and doing good, and making people happy. But, taking an habitual breadth of view, with all his simplicity, he contended that Providence should choose its own method of blessing mankind, and could conceive that this great end might be effected even by a warrior and a bloody sword, should inscrutable wisdom see fit to order matters so.

"The general! the general!" was now the cry. "Hush! silence! Old Blood-and-Thunder's going to make a speech."

Even so; for, the cloth being removed, the general's health had been drunk amid shouts of applause, and he now stood upon his feet to thank the company. Ernest saw him. There he was, over the shoulders of the crowd, from the two glittering epaulets and embroidered collar upward, beneath the arch of green boughs with intertwined laurel, and the banner drooping as if to shade his brow! And there, too, visible in the same glance, through the vista of the forest, appeared the Great Stone Face! And was there, indeed, such a resemblance as the crowd had testified? Alas, Ernest could not recognise it! He beheld a war-worn and weather-beaten countenance, full of energy, and expressive of an iron will; but the gentle wisdom, the deep, broad, tender sympathies, were altogether wanting in Old Blood-and Thunder's visage; and even if the Great Stone Face had assumed his look of stern command, the milder traits would still have tempered it.

"This is not the man of prophecy," sighed Ernest, to himself, as he made his way out of the throng. "And must the world wait longer yet?"

The mists had congregated about the distant mountain-side, and there were seen the grand and awful features of the Great Stone Face, awful but benignant, as if a mighty angel were sitting among the hills, and enrobing himself in a cloud-vesture of gold and purple. As he looked, Ernest

could hardly believe but that a smile beamed over the whole visage, with a radiance still brightening, although without motion of the lips. It was probably the effect of the western sunshine, melting through the thinly diffused vapours that had swept between him and the object that he gazed at. But—as it always did—the aspect of his marvellous friend made Ernest as hopeful as if he had never hoped in vain.

"Fear not, Ernest," said his heart, even as if the Great Face were whispering him—"fear not, Ernest; he will come."

More years sped swiftly and tranquilly away. Ernest still dwelt in his native valley, and was now a man of middle age. By imperceptible degrees, he had become known among the people. Now, as heretofore, he laboured for his bread, and was the same simple-hearted man that he had always been. But he had thought and felt so much, he had given so many of the best hours of his life to unworldly hopes for some great good to mankind, that it seemed as though he had been talking with the angels, and had imbibed a portion of their wisdom unawares. It was visible in the calm and well-considered beneficence of his daily life, the quiet stream of which had made a wide green margin all along its course. Not a day passed by, that the world was not the better because this man, humble as he was, had lived. He never stepped aside from his own path, yet would always reach a blessing to his neighbour. Almost involuntarily, too, he had become a preacher. The pure and high simplicity of his thought, which, as one of its manifestations, took shape in the good deeds that dropped silently from his hand, flowed also forth in speech. He uttered truths that wrought upon and moulded the lives of those who heard him. His auditors, it may be, never suspected that Ernest, their own neighbour and familiar friend,

was more than an ordinary man; least of all did Ernest himself suspect it; but, inevitably as the murmur of a rivulet, came thoughts out of his mouth that no other human lips had spoken.

When the people's minds had had a little time to cool, they were ready enough to acknowledge their mistake in imagining a similarity between General Blood-and-Thunder's truculent physiognomy and the benign visage on the mountain-side. But now, again, there were reports and many paragraphs in the newspapers, affirming that the likeness of the Great Stone Face had appeared upon the broad shoulders of a certain eminent statesman. He, like Mr. Gathergold and Old Blood-and-Thunder, was a native of the valley, but had left it in his early days, and taken up the trades of law and politics. Instead of the rich man's wealth and the warrior's sword, he had but a tongue, and it was mightier than both together. So wonderfully eloquent was he, that whatever he might choose to say, his auditors had no choice but to believe him; wrong looked like right, and right like wrong; for when it pleased him. he could make a kind of illuminated fog with his mere breath, and obscure the natural daylight with it. His tongue, indeed, was a magic instrument: sometimes it rumbled like the thunder; sometimes it warbled like the sweetest music. It was the blast of war—the song of peace; and it seemed to have a heart in it, when there was no such matter. In good truth, he was a wondrous man; and when his tongue had acquired him all other imaginable success—when it had been heard in halls of state, and in the courts of princes and potentates—after it had made him known all over the world, even as a voice crying from shore to shore—it finally persuaded his countrymen to select him for the Presidency. Before this time—indeed, as soon as he began to grow

celebrated—his admirers had found out the resemblance between him and the Great Stone Face; and so much were they struck by it, that throughout the country this distinguished gentleman was known by the name of Old Stony Phiz. The phrase was considered as giving a highly favourable aspect to his political prospects; for, as is likewise the case with the Popedom, nobody ever becomes President without taking a name other than his own.

While his friends were doing their best to make him President, Old Stony Phiz, as he was called, set out on a visit to the valley where he was born. Of course, he had no other object than to shake hands with his fellow-citizens, and neither thought nor cared about any effect which his progress through the country might have upon the election. Magnificent preparations were made to receive the illustrious statesman; a cavalcade of horsemen set forth to meet him at the boundary line of the State, and all the people left their business and gathered along the wayside to see him pass. Among these was Ernest. Though more than once disappointed, as we have seen, he had such a hopeful and confiding nature, that he was always ready to believe in whatever seemed beautiful and good. He kept his heart continually open, and thus was sure to catch the blessing from on high, when it should come. So now again, as buoyantly as ever, he went forth to behold the likeness of the Great Stone Face.

The cavalcade came prancing along the road, with a great clattering of hoofs and a mighty cloud of dust, which rose up so dense and high that the visage of the mountainside was completely hidden from Ernest's eyes. All the great men of the neighbourhood were there on horseback; militia officers, in uniform; the member of Congress; the sheriff of the county; the editors of newspapers; and many

a farmer, too, had mounted his patient steed, with his Sunday coat upon his back. It really was a very brilliant spectacle, especially as there were numerous banners flaunting over the cavalcade, on some of which were gorgeous portraits of the illustrious statesman and the Great Stone Face, smiling familiarly at one another, like two brothers. If the pictures were to be trusted, the mutual resemblance, it must be confessed, was marvellous. We must not forget to mention that there was a band of music, which made the echoes of the mountains ring and reverberate with the loud triumph of its strains; so that airy and soul-thrilling melodies broke out among all the heights and hollows, as if every nook of his native valley had found a voice to welcome the distinguished guest. But the grandest effect was when the far-off mountain precipice flung back the music; for then the Great Stone Face itself seemed to be swelling the triumphant chorus, in acknowledgment that, at length. the man of prophecy was come.

All this while the people were throwing up their hats and shouting, with enthusiasm so contagious that the heart of Ernest kindled up, and he likewise threw up his hat, and shouted, as loudly as the loudest, "Huzza for the great man! Huzza for Old Stony Phiz?" But as yet he had not seen him.

"Here he is, now!" cried those who stood near Ernest. "There! There! Look at Old Stony Phiz and then at the Old Man of the Mountain, and see if they are not as like as two twin-brothers!"

In the midst of all this gallant array, came an open barouche, drawn by four white horses; and in the barouche, with his massive head uncovered, sat the illustrious statesman, Old Stony Phiz himself.

"Confess it," said one of Ernest's neighbours to him. "the Great Stone Face has met its match at last!"

Now, it must be owned that, at his first glimpse of the countenance which was bowing and smiling from the barouche, Ernest did fancy that there was a resemblance between it and the old familiar face upon the mountainside. The brow, with its massive depth and loftiness, and all the other features, indeed, were boldly and strongly hewn, as if in emulation of a more than heroic, of a Titanic model. But the sublimity and stateliness, the grand expression of a divine sympathy, that illuminated the mountain visage, and etherealised its ponderous granite substance into spirit, might here be sought in vain. Something had been originally left out, or had departed. And therefore the marvellously gifted statesman had always a weary gloom in the deep caverns of his eyes, as of a child that has outgrown its playthings, or a man of mighty faculties and little aims, whose life, with all its high performances, was vague and empty, because no high purpose had endowed it with reality.

Still, Ernest's neighbour was thrusting his elbow into his side, and pressing him for an answer.

"Confess! confess! Is not he the very picture of your Old Man of the Mountain?"

"No!" said Ernest, bluntly, "I see little or no likeness."

"Then so much the worse for the Great Stone Face!" answered his neighbour; and again he set up a shout for Old Stony Phiz.

But Ernest turned away, melancholy, and almost despondent: for this was the saddest of his disappointments, to behold a man who might have fulfilled the prophecy, and had not willed to do so. Meantime, the cavalcade, the banners, the music, and the barouches swept past him, with the vociferous crowd in the rear, leaving the dust to settle down, and the Great Stone Face to be revealed again, with the grandeur that it had worn for untold centuries.

"Lo, here I am, Ernest!" the benign lips seemed to say. "I have waited longer than thou, and am not yet weary. Fear not; the man will come."

The years hurried onward, treading in their haste on one another's heels. And now they began to bring white hairs, and scatter them over the head of Ernest; they made reverend wrinkles across his forehead, and furrows in his cheeks. He was an aged man. But not in vain had he grown old; more than the white hairs on his head were the sage thoughts in his mind; his wrinkles and furrows were inscriptions that Time had graved, and in which he had written legends of wisdom that had been tested by the tenor of a life. And Ernest had ceased to be obscure. Unsought for, undesired, had come the fame which so many seek, and made him known in the great world, beyond the limits of the valley in which he had dwelt so quietly. College professors, and even the active men of cities, came from far to see and converse with Ernest; for the report had gone abroad that this simple husbandman had ideas unlike those of other men, not gained from books, but of a higher tone—a tranquil and familiar majesty, as if he had been talking with the angels as his daily friends. Whether it were sage, statesman, or philanthropist, Ernest received these visitors with the gentle sincerity that had characterised him from boyhood, and spoke freely with them of whatever came uppermost, or lay deepest in his heart or their own. While they talked together, his face would kindle, unawares, and shine upon them, as with a mild evening light. Pensive with the fulness of such discourse, his guests took leave and went their way; and passing up the valley, paused to look at the Great Stone Face, imagining that they had seen its likeness in a human countenance, but could not remember where.

While Ernest had been growing up and growing old, a bountiful Providence had granted a new poet to this earth. He, likewise, was a native of the valley, but had spent the greater part of his life at a distance from that romantic region, pouring out his sweet music amid the bustle and din of cities. Often, however, did the mountains which had been familiar to him in his childhood, lift their snowy peaks into the clear atmosphere of his poetry. Neither was the Great Stone Face forgotten, for the poet had celebrated it in an ode, which was grand enough to have been uttered by its own majestic lips. This man of genius, we may say, had come down from heaven with wonderful endowments. If he sang of a mountain, the eyes of all mankind beheld a mightier grandeur reposing on its breast, or soaring to its summit, than had before been seen there. If his theme were a lovely lake, a celestial smile had now been thrown over it, to gleam forever on its surface. If it were the vast old sea, even the deep immensity of its dread bosom seemed to swell the higher, as if moved by the emotions of the song. Thus the world assumed another and a better aspect from the hour that the poet blessed it with his happy eyes. The Creator had bestowed him, as the last best touch to his own handiwork. Creation was not finished till the poet came to interpret, and so complete it.

The effect was no less high and beautiful, when his human brethren were the subject of his verse. The man or woman, sordid with the common dust of life, who crossed his daily path, and the little child who played in it, were glorified if he beheld them in his mood of poetic faith. He showed the golden links of the great chain that intertwined them with an angelic kindred; he brought out the hidden traits of a celestial birth that made them worthy of such kin. Some, indeed, there were, who thought to show the sound-

ness of their judgment by affirming that all the beauty and dignity of the natural world existed only in the poet's fancy. Let such men speak for themselves, who undoubtedly appear to have been spawned forth by Nature with a contemptuous bitterness; she having plastered them up out of her refuse stuff, after all the swine were made. As respects all things else, the poet's ideal was the truest truth.

The songs of this poet found their way to Ernest. He read them after his customary toil, seated on the bench before his cottage-door, where for such a length of time he had filled his repose with thought, by gazing at the Great Stone Face. And now as he read stanzas that caused the soul to thrill within him, he lifted his eyes to the vast countenance beaming on him so benignantly.

"O majestic friend," he murmured, addressing the Great Stone Face, "is not this man worthy to resemble thee?"

The Face seemed to smile, but answered not a word.

Now it happened that the poet, though he dwelt so far away, had not only heard of Ernest, but had meditated much upon his character, until he deemed nothing so desirable as to meet this man, whose untaught wisdom walked hand in hand with the noble simplicity of his life. One summer morning, therefore, he took passage by the railroad, and, in the decline of the afternoon, alighted from the cars at no great distance from Ernest's cottage. The great hotel, which had formerly been the palace of Mr. Gathergold, was close at hand, but the poet, with his carpet-bag on his arm, inquired at once where Ernest dwelt, and was resolved to be accepted as his guest.

Approaching the door, he there found the good old man holding a volume in his hand, which alternately he read, and then, with a finger between the leaves, looked lovingly at the Great Stone Face.

"Good evening," said the poet. "Can you give a traveller a night's lodging?"

"Willingly," answered Ernest; and then he added, smiling, "Methinks I never saw the Great Stone Face look so hospitably at a stranger."

The poet sat down on the bench beside him, and he and Ernest talked together. Often had the poet held intercourse with the wittiest and the wisest, but never before with a man like Ernest, whose thoughts and feelings gushed up with such a natural freedom, and who made great truths so familiar by his simple utterance of them. Angels, as had been so often said, seemed to have wrought with him at his labour in the fields; angels seemed to have sat with him by the fireside; and, dwelling with angels as friend with friends, he had imbibed the sublimity of their ideas, and imbued it with the sweet and lowly charm of household words. So thought the poet. And Ernest, on the other hand, was moved and agitated by the living images which the poet flung out of his mind, and which peopled all the air about the cottage-door with shapes of beauty, both gay and pensive. The sympathies of these two men instructed them with a profounder sense than either could have attained alone. Their minds accorded into one strain, and made delightful music which neither of them could have claimed as all his own, nor distinguished his own share from the other's. They led one another, as it were, into a high pavilion of their thoughts, so remote, and hitherto so dim, that they had never entered it before, and so beautiful that they desired to be there always.

As Ernest listened to the poet, he imagined that the Great Stone Face was bending forward to listen too. He gazed earnestly into the poet's glowing eyes.

"Who are you, my strangely gifted guest?" he said.

The poet laid his finger on the volume that Ernest had been reading.

"You have read these poems," said he. "You know me, then—for I wrote them."

Again, and still more earnestly than before, Ernest examined the poet's features; then turned towards the Great Stone Face; then back, with an uncertain aspect, to his guest. But his countenance fell; he shook his head, and sighed.

"Wherefore are you sad?" inquired the poet.

"Because," replied Ernest, "all through life I have awaited the fulfilment of a prophecy; and, when I read these poems, I hoped that it might be fulfilled in you."

"You hoped," answered the poet, faintly smiling, "to find in me the likeness of the Great Stone Face. And you are disappointed, as formerly with Mr. Gathergold, and Old Blood-and-Thunder, and Old Stony Phiz. Yes, Ernest, it is my doom. You must add my name to the illustrious three, and record another failure of your hopes. For—in shame and sadness do I speak it, Ernest—I am not worthy to be typified by yonder benign and majestic image."

"And why?" asked Ernest. He pointed to the volume. "Are not those thoughts divine?"

"They have a strain of the Divinity," replied the poet. "You can hear in them the far-off echo of a heavenly song. But my life, dear Ernest, has not corresponded with my thought. I have had grand dreams, but they have been only dreams, because I have lived—and that, too, by my own choice—among poor and mean realities. Sometimes even—shall I dare to say it?—I lack faith in the grandeur, the beauty, and the goodness, which my own works are said to have made more evident in nature and in human life. Why, then, pure seeker of the good and

true, shouldst thou hope to find me, in yonder image of the divine?"

The poet spoke sadly, and his eyes were dim with tears. So, likewise, were those of Ernest.

At the hour of sunset, as had long been his frequent custom, Ernest was to discourse to an assemblage of the neighbouring inhabitants in the open air. He and the poet, arm in arm, still talking together as they went along, proceeded to the spot. It was a small nook among the hills, with a gray precipice behind, the stern front of which was relieved by the pleasant foliage of many creeping plants, that made a tapestry for the naked rocks, by hanging their festoons from all its rugged angles. At a small elevation above the ground, set in a rich framework of verdure, there appeared a niche, spacious enough to admit a human figure, with freedom for such gestures as spontaneously accompany earnest thought and genuine emotion. Into this natural pulpit Ernest ascended, and threw a look of familiar kindness around upon his audience. They stood, or sat, or reclined upon the grass, as seemed good to each, with the departing sunshine falling obliquely over them, and mingling its subdued cheerfulness with the solemnity of a grove of ancient trees, beneath and amid the boughs of which the golden rays were constrained to pass. In another direction was seen the Great Stone Face, with the same cheer, combined with the same solemnity, in its benignant aspect.

Ernest began to speak, giving to the people of what was in his heart and mind. His words had power, because they accorded with his thoughts; and his thoughts had reality and depth, because they harmonised with the life which he had always lived. It was not mere breath that this preacher uttered; they were the words of life, because a life of good deeds and holy love was melted into them. Pearls, pure and

rich, had been dissolved into this precious draught. The poet, as he listened, felt that the being and character of Ernest were a nobler strain of poetry than he had ever written. His eyes glistening with tears, he gazed reverentially at the venerable man, and said within himself that never was there an aspect so worthy of a prophet and a sage as that mild, sweet, thoughtful countenance, with the glory of white hair diffused about it. At a distance, but distinctly to be seen, high up in the golden light of the setting sun, appeared the Great Stone Face, with hoary mists around it, like the white hairs around the brow of Ernest. Its look of grand beneficence seemed to embrace the world.

At that moment, in sympathy with a thought which he was about to utter, the face of Ernest assumed a grandeur of expression, so imbued with benevolence, that the poet, by an irresistible impulse, threw his arms aloft, and shouted:

"Behold! Behold! Ernest is himself the likeness of the Great Stone Face."

Then all the people looked, and saw that what the deep-sighted poet said was true. The prophecy was fulfilled. But Ernest, having finished what he had to say, took the poet's arm, and walked slowly homeward, still hoping that some wiser and better man than himself would by and by appear, bearing a resemblance to the *Great Stone Face*.

VII

THE DIVERTING HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN

SHOWING HOW HE WENT FARTHER THAN HE INTENDED AND CAME SAFE HOME AGAIN

JOHN GILPIN was a citizen
Of credit and renown,
A train-band captain eke was he
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear,
"Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
No holiday have seen.

"To-morrow is our wedding-day,
And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton
All in a chaise and pair.

"My sister and my sister's child,
Myself, and children three,
Will fill the chaise; so you must ride
On horseback after we."

He soon replied, "I do admire
Of womankind but one,
And you are she, my dearest dear,
Therefore it shall be done.

"I am a linen-draper bold,
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the calender
Will lend his horse to go."

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin, "That's well said;
And for that wine is dear,
We will be furnished with our own,
Which is both bright and clear."

John Gilpin kissed his loving wife;
O'erjoyed was he to find,
That, though on pleasure she was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
But yet was not allowed
To drive up to the door, lest all
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stayed,
Where they did all get in;
Six precious souls, and all agog
To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
Were never folks so glad,
The stones did rattle underneath,
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side
Seized fast the flowing mane,
And up he got, in haste to ride,
But soon came down again;

For saddle-tree scarce reached had he,
His journey to begin,
When, turning round his head, he saw
Three customers come in.

So down he came; for loss of time,
Although it grieved him sore,
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,
Would trouble him much more.

'T was long before the customers
Were suited to their mind,
When Betty screaming came down stairs,
"The wine is left behind!"

"Good lack!" quoth he—"yet bring it me,
My leathern belt likewise,
In which I bear my trusty sword,
When I do exercise."

Now Mistress Gilpin (careful soul!)
Had two stone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that she loved,
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew,
And hung a bottle on each side,
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be
Equipped from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well brushed and neat,
He manfully did throw,

Now see him mounted once again
Upon his nimble steed,
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones,
With caution and good heed.

But finding soon a smoother road
Beneath his well-shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which galled him in his seat.

So, "Fair and softly," John he cried,
But John he cried in vain;
That trot became a gallop soon,
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs be must
Who cannot sit upright,
He grasped the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought;
Away went hat and wig;
He little dreamt, when he set out,
Of running such a rig.

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like streamer long and gay,
Till loop and button failing both,
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern
The bottles he has slung;
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children screamed,
Up flew the windows all;
And every soul cried out, "Well done!"
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he?
His fame soon spread around;
"He carries weight!" "He rides a race!"
" 'T is for a thousand pound!"

And still, as fast as he drew near,
'T was wonderful to view,
How in a trice the turnpike-men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shattered at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
Most piteous to be seen,
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke
As they had basted been.

But still he seemed to carry weight,
With leathern girdle braced;
For all might see the bottle necks
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
These gambols he did play,
Until he came unto the Wash
Of Edmonton so gay;

And there he threw the Wash about
On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling mop,
Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife
From the balcony she spied
Her tender husband, wondering much
To see how he did ride.

"Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—Here's the house!"
They all at once did cry;
"The dinner waits, and we are tired;"
Said Gilpin—"So am I!"

But yet his horse was not a whit
Inclined to tarry there;
For why?—his owner had a house
Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,
Shot by an archer strong;
So did he fly—which brings me to
The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin, out of breath,
And sore against his will,
Till at his friend's the calender's
His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amazed to see
His neighbour in such trim,
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
And thus accosted him:

"What news? what news? your tidings tell;
Tell me you must and shall—
Say why bareheaded you are come,
Or why you come at all?"

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,
And loved a timely joke;
And thus unto the calender
In merry guise he spoke:

"I came because your horse would come;
And, if I well forebode,
My hat and wig will soon be here,
They are upon the road."

The calender, right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Returned him not a single word,
But to the house went in;

Whence straight he came with hat and wig;
A wig that flowed behind,
A hat not much the worse for wear,
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn
Thus showed his ready wit,
"My head is twice as big as yours,
They therefore needs must fit.

"But let me scrape the dirt away
That hangs upon your face;
And stop and eat, for well you may
Be in a hungry case."

Said John, "It is my wedding-day,
And all the world would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
And I should dine at Ware."

So turning to his horse, he said,
"I am in haste to dine;
'T was for your pleasure you came here,
You shall go back for mine."

Ah, luckless speech, and bootless boast!
For which he paid full dear;
For, while he spake, a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he
Had heard a lion roar,
And galloped off with all his might,
As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig:
He lost them sooner than at first;
For why?—they were too big.

Now Mrs. Gilpin, when she saw
Her husband posting down
Into the country far away,
She pulled out half-a-crown;

And thus unto the youth, she said,
That drove them to the Bell,
"This shall be yours, when you bring back
My husband safe and well."

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
John coming back amain;
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,
By catching at his rein;

But not performing what he meant,
And gladly would have done,
The frightened steed he frighted more,
And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went postboy at his heels,
The postboy's horse right glad to miss
The lumbering of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road,
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With postboy scampering in the rear,
They raised the hue and cry:—

"Stop thief! stop thief! a highwayman!'
Not one of them was mute;
And all and each that passed that way
Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turnpike gates again
Flew open in short space;
The toll-men thinking, as before,
That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,
For he got first to town;
Nor stopped till where he had got up
He did again get down.

Now let us sing, Long live the king!
And Gilpin long live he;
And, when he next doth ride abroad,
May I be there to see!

1785 —William Cowper.

VIII

THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

I SUPPOSE that very few casual readers of the *New York Herald* of August 13, 1863, observed, in an obscure corner, among the "Deaths," the announcement,—

"NOLAN. Died, on board U. S. Corvette *Levant*, Lat. 2° 11′ S., Long. 131° W., on the 11th of May, PHILIP NOLAN."

I happened to observe it, because I was stranded at the old Mission House in Mackinaw, waiting for a Lake Superior steamer which did not choose to come, and I was devouring to the very stubble all the current literature I could get hold of, even down to the deaths and marriages in the *Herald*. My memory for names and people is good, and the reader will see, as he goes on, that I had reason enough to remember Philip Nolan. There are hundreds of readers who would have paused at that announcement, if the officer of the *Levant* who reported it had chosen to make it thus: "Died May 11th, THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY." For it was as "The Man without a Country" that poor Philip Nolan had generally been known by the officers who had him in charge during some fifty years, as, indeed, by all the men who sailed under them. I dare say there is many a man who has taken wine with him once a fortnight, in a three years' cruise, who never knew that his name was "Nolan," or whether the poor wretch had any name at all.

There can now be no possible harm in telling this poor creature's story. Reason enough there has been till now

ever since Madison's administration went out in 1817, for very strict secrecy, the secrecy of honour itself, among the gentlemen of the navy who have had Nolan in successive charge. And certainly it speaks well for the *esprit de corps* of the profession, and the personal honour of its members, that to the press this man's story has been wholly unknown—and, I think, to the country at large also. I have reason to think, from some investigations I made in the Naval Archives when I was attached to the Bureau of Construction, that every official report relating to him was burned when Ross burned the public buildings at Washington. One of the Tuckers, or possibly one of the Watsons, had Nolan in charge at the end of the war; and when, on returning from his cruise, he reported at Washington to one of the Crowninshields—who was in the Navy Department when he came home—he found that the Department ignored the whole business. Whether they really knew nothing about it, or whether it was a "*Non mi ricordo*," determined on as a piece of policy I do not know. But this I do know, that since 1817, and possibly before, no naval officer has mentioned Nolan in his report of a cruise.

But, as I say, there is no need for secrecy any longer. And now the poor creature is dead, it seems to me worth while to tell a little of his story, by way of showing young Americans of to-day what it is to be A MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY.

PHILIP NOLAN was as fine a young officer as there was in the "Legion of the West," as the Western division of our army was then called. When Aaron Burr made his first dashing expedition down to New Orleans in 1805, at Fort Massac, or somewhere above on the river, he met, as the Devil would have it, this gay, dashing, bright young fellow; at some dinner-party, I think. Burr marked him, talked to him, walked with him, took him a day or two's voyage in

his flat-boat, and, in short, fascinated him. For the next year, barrack-life was very tame to poor Nolan. He occasionally availed himself of the permission the great man had given him to write to him. Long, high-worded, stilted letters the poor boy wrote and rewrote and copied. But never a line did he have in reply from the gay deceiver. The other boys in the garrison sneered at him, because he lost the fun which they found in shooting or rowing while he was working away on these grand letters to his grand friend. They could not understand why Nolan kept by himself while they were playing high-low-jack. Poker was not yet invented. But before long the young fellow had his revenge. For this time His Excellency, Honourable Aaron Burr, appeared again under a very different aspect. There were rumours that he had an army behind him and everybody supposed that he had an empire before him. At that time the youngsters all envied him. Burr had not been talking twenty minutes with the commander before he asked him to send for Lieutenant Nolan. Then after a little talk he asked Nolan if he could show him something of the great river and the plans for the new post. He asked Nolan to take him out in his skiff to show him a canebrake or a cotton-wood tree, as he said, really to seduce him; and by the time the sail was over, Nolan was enlisted body and soul. From that time, though he did not yet know it, he lived as A MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY.

What Burr meant to do I know no more than you, dear reader. It is none of our business just now. Only, when the grand catastrophe came, and Jefferson and the House of Virginia of that day undertook to break on the wheel all the possible Clarences of the then House of York, by the great treason trial at Richmond, some of the lesser fry in that distant Mississippi Valley, which was farther from us than

Puget's Sound is to-day, introduced the like novelty on their provincial stage; and, to while away the monotony of the summer at Fort Adams, got up, for *spectacles*, a string of courts-martial on the officers there. One and another of the colonels and majors were tried, and, to fill out the list, little Nolan, against whom, Heaven knows, there was evidence enough—that he was sick of the service, had been willing to be false to it, and would have obeyed any order to march any whither with anyone who would follow him had the order been signed, "By command of His Exc. A. Burr." The courts dragged on. The big flies escaped, rightly for all I know. Nolan was proved guilty enough, as I say; yet you and I would never have heard of him, reader, but that, when the president of the court asked him at the close whether he wished to say anything to show that he had always been faithful to the United States, he cried out, in a fit of frenzy—

"Damn the United States! I wish I may never hear of the United States again!"

I suppose he did not know how the words shocked old Colonel Morgan, who was holding the court. Half the officers who sat in it had served through the Revolution, and their lives, not to say their necks, had been risked for the very idea which he so cavalierly cursed in his madness. He, on his part, had grown up in the West of those days, in the midst of "Spanish plot," "Orleans plot," and all the rest. He had been educated on a plantation where the finest company was a Spanish officer or a French merchant from Orleans. His education, such as it was, had been perfected in commercial expeditions to Vera Cruz, and I think he told me his father once hired an Englishman to be a private tutor for a winter on the plantation. He had spent half his youth with an older brother, hunting horses in Texas; and, in a

word, to him "United States" was scarcely a reality. Yet he had been fed by "United States" for all the years since he had been in the army. He had sworn on his faith as a Christian to be true to "United States." It was "United States" which gave him the uniform he wore, and the sword by his side. Nay, my poor Nolan, it was only because "United States" had picked you out first as one of her own confidential men of honour that "A. Burr" cared for you a straw more than for the flat-boat men who sailed his ark for him. I do not excuse Nolan; I only explain to the reader why he damned his country, and wished he might never hear her name again.

He never did hear her name but once again. From that moment, Sept. 23, 1807, till the day he died, May 11, 1863, he never heard her name again. For that half-century and more he was a man without a country.

Old Morgan, as I said, was terribly shocked. If Nolan had compared George Washington to Benedict Arnold, or had cried, "God save King George," Morgan would not have felt worse. He called the court into his private room, and returned in fifteen minutes, with a face like a sheet, to say :

"Prisoner, hear the sentence of the Court! The Court decides, subject to the approval of the President, that you never hear the name of the United States again."

Nolan laughed. But nobody else laughed. Old Morgan was too solemn, and the whole room was hushed dead as night for a minute. Even Nolan lost his swagger in a moment. Then Morgan added :

"Mr. Marshal, take the prisoner to Orleans in an armed boat, and deliver him to the naval commander there."

The marshal gave his orders and the prisoner was taken out of court.

"Mr. Marshal," continued old Morgan, "see that no one

mentions the United States to the prisoner. Mr. Marshal, make my respects to Lieutenant Mitchell at Orleans, and request him to order that no one shall mention the United States to the prisoner while he is on board ship. You will receive your written orders from the officer on duty here this evening. The Court is adjourned without day."

I have always supposed that Colonel Morgan himself took the proceedings of the court to Washington city, and explained them to Mr. Jefferson. Certain it is that the President approved them—certain, that is, if I may believe the men who say they have seen his signature. Before the *Nautilus* got round from New Orleans to the Northern Atlantic coast with the prisoner on board, the sentence had been approved, and he was a man without a country.

The plan then adopted was substantially the same which was necessarily followed ever after. Perhaps it was suggested by the necessity of sending him by water from Fort Adams and Orleans. The Secretary of the Navy—it must have been the first Crowninshield, though he is a man I do not remember—was requested to put Nolan on board a government vessel bound on a long cruise, and to direct that he should be only so far confined there as to make it certain that he never saw or heard of the country. We had few long cruises then, and the navy was very much out of favour; and as almost all of this story is traditional, as I have explained, I do not know certainly what his first cruise was. But the commander to whom he was intrusted—perhaps it was Tingey or Shaw, though I think it was one of the younger men—we are all old enough now—regulated the etiquette and the precautions of the affair, and according to his scheme they were carried out, I suppose, till Nolan died.

When I was second officer of the *Intrepid*, some thirty years after, I saw the original paper of instructions. I have

been sorry ever since that I did not copy the whole of it. It ran, however, much in this way—

WASHINGTON (with a date, which must have been late in 1807).

Sir,

You will receive from Lieutenant Neale the person of Philip Nolan, late a lieutenant in the United States army.

This person on his trial by court-martial expressed, with an oath, the wish that he might never hear of the United States again.

The Court sentenced him to have his wish fulfilled.

For the present, the execution of the order is intrusted by the President to this Department.

You will take the prisoner on board your ship, and keep him there with such precautions as shall prevent his escape.

You will provide him with such quarters, rations, and clothing as would be proper for an officer of his late rank, if he were a passenger on your vessel on the business of his Government.

The gentlemen on board will make any arrangements agreeable to themselves regarding his society. He is to be exposed to no indignity of any kind, nor is he ever unnecessarily to be reminded that he is a prisoner.

But under no circumstances is he ever to hear of his country or to see any information regarding it; and you will especially caution all the officers under your command to take care, that, in the various indulgences which may be granted, this rule, in which his punishment is involved, shall not be broken.

It is the intention of the Government that he shall never again see the country which he has disowned. Before the end of your cruise you will receive orders which will give effect to this intention.

Respectfully yours,

W. SOUTHARD, for the
Secretary of the Navy.

If I had only preserved the whole of this paper, there would be no break in the beginning of my sketch of this story. For Captain Shaw, if it were he, handed it to his

successor in the charge, and he to his, and I suppose the commander of the *Levant* has it to-day as his authority for keeping this man in this mild custody.

The rule adopted on board the ships on which I have met "the man without a country" was, I think, transmitted from the beginning. No mess liked to have him permanently, because his presence cut off all talk of home or the prospect of return, of politics or letters, of peace or of war—cut off more than half the talk men liked to have at sea. But it was always thought too hard that he should never meet the rest of us, except to touch hats, and we finally sank into one system. He was not permitted to talk with the men, unless an officer was by. With officers he had unrestrained intercourse, as far as they and he chose. But he grew shy, though he had favourites: I was one. Then the captain always asked him to dinner on Monday. Every mess in succession took up the invitation in its turn. According to the size of the ship, you had him at your mess more or less often at dinner. His breakfast he ate in his own state-room —he always had a state-room—which was where a sentinel or somebody on the watch could see the door. And whatever else he ate or drank, he ate or drank alone. Sometimes, when the marines or sailors had any special jollification, they were permitted to invite "Plain-Buttons," as they called him. Then Nolan was sent with some officer, and the men were forbidden to speak of home while he was there. I believe the theory was that the sight of his punishment did them good. They called him "Plain-Buttons," because, while he always chose to wear a regulation army-uniform, he was not permitted to wear the army-button, for the reason that it bore either the initials or the insignia of the country he had disowned.

I remember, soon after I joined the navy, I was on shore

with some of the older officers from our ship and from the *Brandywine*, which we had met at Alexandria. We had leave to make a party and go up to Cairo and the Pyramids. As we jogged along (you went on donkeys then), some of the gentlemen (we boys called them "Dons," but the phrase was long since changed) fell to talking about Nolan, and someone told the system which was adopted from the first about his books and other reading. As he was almost never permitted to go on shore, even though the vessel lay in port for months, his time at the best hung heavy; and everybody was permitted to lend him books, if they were not published in America and made no allusion to it. These were common enough in the old days, when people in the other hemisphere talked of the United States as little as we do of Paraguay. He had almost all the foreign papers that came into the ship, sooner or later; only somebody must go over them first, and cut out any advertisement or stray paragraph that alluded to America. This was a little cruel sometimes, when the back of what was cut out might be as innocent as Hesiod. Right in the midst of one of Napoleon's battles, or one of Canning's speeches, poor Nolan would find a great hole, because on the back of the page of that paper there had been an advertisement of a packet for New York, or a scrap from the President's message. I say this was the first time I ever heard of this plan, which afterwards I had enough and more than enough to do with. I remember it, because poor Phillips, who was of the party, as soon as the allusion to reading was made, told a story of something which happened at the Cape of Good Hope on Nolan's first voyage; and it is the only thing I ever knew of that voyage. They had touched at the Cape, and had done the civil thing with the English Admiral and the fleet, and then, leaving for a long cruise up the Indian Ocean, Phillips had borrowed a lot of

English books from an officer, which, in those days, as indeed in these, was quite a windfall. Among them, as the Devil would order, was the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," which they had all of them heard of, but which most of them had never seen. I think it could not have been published long. Well, nobody thought there could be any risk of anything national in that, though Phillips swore old Shaw had cut out the "Tempest" from Shakespeare before he let Nolan have it, because he said "the Bermudas ought to be ours, and, by Jove, should be one day." So Nolan was permitted to join the circle one afternoon when a lot of them sat on deck smoking and reading aloud. People do not do such things so often now; but when I was young we got rid of a great deal of time so. Well, so it happened that in his turn Nolan took the book and read to the others; and he read very well, as I know. Nobody in the circle knew a line of the poem, only it was all magic and Border chivalry, and was ten thousand years ago. Poor Nolan read steadily through the fifth canto, stopped a minute and drank something, and then began, without a thought of what was coming:

> "Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself hath said,"—

It seems impossible to us that anybody ever heard this for the first time; but all these fellows did then, and poor Nolan himself went on, still unconsciously or mechanically—

> "This is my own, my native land!"

Then they all saw that something was to pay; but he expected to get through, I suppose, turned a little pale, but plunged on,

> "Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
> As home his footsteps he hath turned
> From wandering on a foreign strand?—
> If such there breathe, go, mark him well—"

By this time the men were all beside themselves, wishing there was any way to make him turn over two pages; but he had not quite presence of mind for that; he gagged a little, coloured crimson, and staggered on—

> "For him no minstrel raptures swell;
> High though his titles, proud his name,
> Boundless his wealth as wish can claim,
> Despite these titles, power, and pelf,
> The wretch, concentred all in self—"

and here the poor fellow choked, could not go on, but started up, swung the book into the sea, vanished into his state-room, "And by Jove," said Phillips, "we did not see him for two months again. And I had to make up some beggarly story to that English surgeon why I did not return his Walter Scott to him."

That story shows about the time when Nolan's braggadocio must have broken down. At first, they said, he took a very high tone, considered his imprisonment a mere farce, affected to enjoy the voyage, and all that; but Phillips said that after he came out of his state-room he never was the same man again. He never read aloud again unless it was the Bible or Shakespeare, or something else he was sure of. But it was not that merely. He never entered in with the other young men exactly as a companion again. He was always shy afterwards, when I knew him—very seldom spoke, unless he was spoken to, except to a very few friends. He lighted up occasionally—I remember late in his life hearing him fairly eloquent on something which had been suggested to him by one of Fléchier's sermons—but generally he had the nervous, tired look of a heart-wounded man.

When Captain Shaw was coming home—if, as I say, it was Shaw—rather to the surprise of everybody they made

one of the Windward Islands, and lay off and on for nearly a week. The boys said the officers were sick of salt-junk, and meant to have turtle-soup before they came home. But after several days the *Warren* came to the same rendezvous; they exchanged signals; she sent to Phillips and these homeward-bound men letters and papers, and told them she was outward-bound, perhaps to the Mediterranean, and took poor Nolan and his traps on the boat back to try his second cruise. He looked very blank when he was told to get ready to join her. He had known enough of the signs of the sky to know that till that moment he was going "home." But this was a distinct evidence of something he had not thought of, perhaps—that there was no going home for him, even to a prison. And this was the first of some twenty such transfers, which brought him sooner or later into half our best vessels, but which kept him all his life at least some hundred miles from the country he had hoped he might never hear of again.

It may have been on that second cruise—it was once when he was up the Mediterranean,—that Mrs. Graff, the celebrated Southern beauty of those days, danced with him. They had been lying a long time in the Bay of Naples, and the officers were very intimate in the English fleet, and there had been great festivities, and our men thought they must give a great ball on board the ship. How they ever did it on board the *Warren* I am sure I do not know. Perhaps it was not the *Warren*, or perhaps ladies did not take up so much room as they do now. They wanted to use Nolan's state-room for something, and they hated to do it without asking him to the ball; so the captain said they might ask him, if they would be responsible that he did not talk with the wrong people, "who would give him intelligence." So the dance went on, the finest party that had ever been known,

I dare say; for I never heard of a man-of-war ball that was not. For ladies they had the family of the American consul, one or two travellers who had adventured so far, and a nice bevy of English girls and matrons, perhaps Lady Hamilton herself.

Well, different officers relieved each other in standing and talking with Nolan in a friendly way, so as to be sure that nobody else spoke to him. The dancing went on with spirit, and after a while even the fellows who took this honorary guard of Nolan ceased to fear any *contretemps*. Only when some English lady—Lady Hamilton, as I said, perhaps—called for a set of "American dances," an odd thing happened. Everybody then danced contra-dances. The black band, nothing loath, conferred as to what "American dances" were, and started off with "Virginia Reel," which they followed with "Money Musk," which, in its turn in those days, should have been followed by "The Old Thirteen." But just as Dick, the leader, tapped for his fiddles to begin, and bent forward, about to say, in true negro state, " 'The Old Thirteen,' gentlemen and ladies!" as he had said " 'Virginny Reel,' if you please!" and " 'Money-Musk,' if you please!" the captain's boy tapped him on the shoulder, whispered to him, and he did not announce the name of the dance; he merely bowed, began on the air, and they all fell to—the officers teaching the English girls the figure, but not telling them why it had no name.

But that is not the story I started to tell. As the dancing went on, Nolan and our fellows all got at ease, as I said: so much so, that it seemed quite natural for him to bow to that splendid Mrs. Graff and say:

"I hope you have not forgotten me, Miss Rutledge. Shall I have the honour of dancing?"

He did it so quickly, that Fellows, who was with him, could not hinder him. She laughed and said:

"I am not Miss Rutledge any longer, Mr. Nolan; but I will dance all the same," just nodded to Fellows, as if to say he must leave Mr. Nolan to her, and led him off to the place where the dance was forming.

Nolan thought he had got his chance. He had known her at Philadelphia, and at other places had met her, and this was a godsend. You could not talk in contra-dances as you do in cotillions, or even in the pauses of waltzing; but there were chances for tongues and sounds, as well as for eyes and blushes. He began with her travels, and Europe, and Vesuvius, and the French; and then, when they had worked down, and had that long talking time at the bottom of the set, he said boldly—a little pale, she said, as she told me the story years after—

"And what do you hear from home, Mrs. Graff?"

And that splendid creature looked through him. Jove! how she must have looked through him!

"Home!! Mr. Nolan!!! I thought you were the man who never wanted to hear of home again!"—and she walked directly up the deck to her husband, and left poor Nolan alone, as he always was—He did not dance again. I cannot give any history of him in order; nobody can now; and, indeed, I am not trying to.

These are the traditions, which I sort out, as I believe them, from the myths which have been told about this man for forty years. The lies that have been told about him are legion. The fellows used to say he was the "Iron Mask;" and poor George Pons went to his grave in the belief that this was the author of "Junius," who was being punished for his celebrated libel on Thomas Jefferson. Pons was not very strong in the historical line.

A happier story than either of these I have told is of the war. That came along soon after. I have heard this affair told in three or four ways—and, indeed, it may have happened more than once. But which ship it was on I cannot tell. However, in one at least, of the great frigate-duels with the English, in which the navy was really baptised, it happened that a round-shot from the enemy entered one of our ports square, and took right down the officer of the gun himself, and almost every man of the gun's crew. Now you may say what you choose about courage, but that is not a nice thing to see. But, as the men who were not killed picked themselves up, and as they and the surgeon's people were carrying off the bodies, there appeared Nolan, in his shirt-sleeves, with the rammer in his hand, and, just as if he had been the officer, told them off with authority—who should go to the cock-pit with the wounded men, who should stay with him—perfectly cheery, and with that way which makes men feel sure all is right and is going to be right. And he finished loading the gun with his own hands, aimed it, and bade the men fire. And there he stayed, captain of that gun, keeping those fellows in spirits, till the enemy struck—sitting on the carriage while the gun was cooling, though he was exposed all the time—showing them easier ways to handle heavy shot—making the raw hands laugh at their own blunders—and when the gun cooled again, getting it loaded and fired twice as often as any other gun on the ship. The captain walked forward by way of encouraging the men, and Nolan touched his hat and said:

"I am showing them how we do this in the artillery, sir."

And this is the part of the story where all the legends agree; the commodore said:

"I see you do, and I thank you, sir; and I shall never forget this day, sir, and you never shall, sir."

And after the whole thing was over, and he had the Englishman's sword, in the midst of the state and ceremony of the quarter-deck, he said:

"Where is Mr. Nolan? Ask Mr. Nolan to come here."

And when Nolan came, he said:

"Mr. Nolan, we are all very grateful to you to-day; you are one of us to-day; you will be named in the despatches."

And then the old man took off his own sword of ceremony, and gave it to Nolan, and made him put it on. The man told me this who saw it. Nolan cried like a baby, and well he might. He had not worn a sword since that infernal day at Fort Adams. But always afterwards on occasions of ceremony, he wore that quaint old French sword of the commodore's.

The captain did mention him in the despatches. It was always said he asked that he might be pardoned. He wrote a special letter to the Secretary of War. But nothing ever came of it. As I said, that was about the time when they began to ignore the whole transaction at Washington, and when Nolan's imprisonment began to carry itself on because there was nobody to stop it without any new orders from home.

I have heard it said that he was with Porter when he took possession of the Nukahiwa Islands. Not this Porter, you know, but old Porter, his father, Essex Porter—that is, the old Essex Porter, not this Essex. As an artillery officer, who had seen service in the West, Nolan knew more about fortifications, embrasures, ravelins, stockades, and all that, than any of them did; and he worked with a right good-will in fixing that battery all right. I have always thought it was a pity Porter did not leave him in command there with Gamble. That would have settled all the question about his punishment. We should have kept the islands, and at

this moment we should have one station in the Pacific Ocean. Our French friends, too, when they wanted this little watering-place, would have found it was preoccupied. But Madison and the Virginians, of course, flung all that away.

All that was near fifty years ago. If Nolan was thirty then, he must have been near eighty when he died. He looked sixty when he was forty. But he never seemed to me to change a hair afterwards. As I imagine his life, from what I have seen and heard of it, he must have been in every sea, and yet almost never on land. He must have known, in a formal way, more officers in our service than any man living knows. He told me once, with a grave smile, that no man in the world lived so methodical a life as he. "You know the boys say I am the Iron Mask, and you know how busy he was." He said it did not do for anyone to try to read all the time, more than to do anything else all the time; and that he used to read just five hours a day. "Then," he said, "I keep up my note-books, writing in them at such and such hours from what I have been reading; and I include in these my scrap-books." These were very curious indeed. He had six or eight, of different subjects. There was one of History, one of Natural Science, one which he called "Odds and Ends." But they were not merely books of extracts from newspapers. They had bits of plants and ribbons, shells tied on, and carved scraps of bone and wood, which he had taught the men to cut for him, and they were beautifully illustrated. He drew admirably. He had some of the funniest drawings there, and some of the most pathetic, that I have ever seen in my life. I wonder who will have Nolan's scrap-books.

Well, he said his reading and his notes were his profession, and that they took five hours and two hours respectively of each day. "Then," said he, "every man should have a

diversion as well as a profession. My Natural History is my diversion." That took two hours a day more. The men used to bring him birds and fish, but on a long cruise he had to satisfy himself with centipedes and cockroaches and such small game. He was the only naturalist I ever met who knew anything about the habits of the house-fly and the mosquito. All those people can tell you whether they are *Lepidoptera* or *Steptopotera;* but as for telling how you can get rid of them, or how they get away from you when you strike them—why Linnæus knew as little of that as John Foy the idiot did. These nine hours made Nolan's regular daily "occupation." The rest of the time he talked or walked. Till he grew very old, he went aloft a great deal. He always kept up his exercise; and I never heard that he was ill. If any other man was ill, he was the kindest nurse in the world; and he knew more than half the surgeons do. Then if anybody was sick or died, or if the captain wanted him to, on any other occasion, he was always ready to read prayers. I have said that he read beautifully.

My own acquaintance with Philip Nolan began six or eight years after the English war, on my first voyage after I was appointed a midshipman. It was in the first days after our Slave-Trade treaty, while the Reigning House, which was still the House of Virginia, had still a sort of sentimentalism about the suppression of the horrors of the Middle Passage, and something was sometimes done that way. We were in the South Atlantic on that business. From the time I joined, I believe I thought Nolan was a sort of lay chaplain—a chaplain with a blue coat. I never asked about him. Everything in the ship was strange to me. I knew it was green to ask questions, and I suppose I thought there was a "Plain-Buttons" on every ship. We had him to dine in our mess once a week, and the caution was given

that on that day nothing was to be said about home. But if they had told us not to say anything about the planet Mars or the Book of Deuteronomy, I should not have asked why; there were a great many things which seemed to me to have as little reason. I first came to understand anything about "the man without a country" one day when we overhauled a dirty little schooner which had slaves on board. An officer was sent to take charge of her, and, after a few minutes, he sent back his boat to ask that someone might be sent him who could speak Portuguese. We were all looking over the rail when the message came, and we all wished we could interpret, when the captain asked who spoke Portuguese. But none of the officers did; and just as the captain was sending forward to ask if any of the people could, Nolan stepped out and said he should be glad to interpret, if the captain wished, as he understood the language. The captain thanked him, fitted out another boat with him, and in this boat it was my luck to go.

When we got there, it was such a scene as you seldom see, and never want to. Nastiness beyond account, and chaos run loose in the midst of the nastiness. There were not a great many of the negroes; but by way of making what there were understand that they were free, Vaughan had had their handcuffs, and ankle-cuffs knocked off, and, for convenience's sake, was putting them upon the rascals of the schooner's crew. The negroes were, most of them, out of the hold, and swarming all round the dirty deck, with a central throng surrounding Vaughan and addressing him in every dialect, and *patois* of a dialect, from the Zulu click up to the Parisian of Beledeljereed.

As we came on deck, Vaughan looked down from a hogshead, on which he had mounted in desperation, and said—

"For God's love, is there anybody who can make these

wretches understand something? The men gave them rum, and that did not quiet them. I knocked that big fellow down twice, and that did not soothe him. And then I talked Choctaw to all of them together; and I'll be hanged if they understood that as well as they understood the English."

Nolan said he could speak Portuguese, and one or two fine-looking Kroomen were dragged out, who, as it had been found already, had worked for the Portuguese on the coast at Fernando Po.

"Tell them they are free," said Vaughan; "and tell them that these rascals are to be hanged as soon as we can get rope enough."

Nolan "put that into Spanish," that is, he explained it in such Portuguese as the Kroomen could understand, and they in turn to such of the negroes as could understand them. Then there was such a yell of delight, clinching of fists, leaping and dancing, kissing of Nolan's feet, and a general rush made to the hogshead by way of spontaneous worship of Vaughan, as the *deus ex machina* of the occasion.

"Tell them," said Vaughan, well pleased, "that I will take them all to Cape Palmas."

This did not answer so well. Cape Palmas was practically as far from the homes of most of them as New Orleans or Rio Janeiro was; that is they would be eternally separated from home there. And their interpreters, as we could understand, instantly said, "*Ah, non Palmas*," and began to propose infinite other expedients in most voluble language. Vaughan was rather disappointed at this result of his libet ality, and asked Nolan eagerly what they said. The drops stood on poor Nolan's white forehead, as he hushed the men down, and said:

"He says, 'Not Palmas.' He says, 'Take us home, take

us to our own country, take us to our own house, take us to our own pickaninnies and our own women.' He says he has an old father and mother who will die if they do not see him. And this one says he left his people all sick, and paddled down to Fernando to beg the white doctor to come and help them, and that these devils caught him in the bay just in sight of home, and that he has never seen anybody from home since then. And this one says," choked out Nolan, "that he has not heard a word from his home in six months, while he has been locked up in an infernal barracoon."

Vaughan always said he grew gray himself while Nolan struggled through this interpretation. I, who did not understand anything of the passion involved in it, saw that the very elements were melting with fervent heat, and that something was to pay somewhere. Even the negroes themselves stopped howling, as they saw Nolan's agony, and Vaughan's almost equal agony of sympathy. As quick as he could get words, he said:

"Tell them yes, yes, yes; tell them they shall go to the Mountains of the Moon, if they will. If I sail the schooner through the Great White Desert, they shall go home!"

And after some fashion Nolan said so. And then they all fell to kissing him again, and wanted to rub his nose with theirs.

But he could not stand it long; and getting Vaughan to say he might go back, he beckoned me down into our boat. As we lay back in the stern-sheets and the men gave way, he said to me: "Youngster, let that show you what it is to be without a family, without a home, and without a country. And if you are ever tempted to say a word or to do a thing that shall put a bar between you and your family, your home, and your country, pray God in His mercy to take you that

instant home to His own heaven. Stick by your family, boy; forget you have a self, while you do everything for them. Think of your home, boy; write and send, and talk about it. Let it be nearer and nearer to your thought, the farther you have to travel from it; and rush back to it when you are free, as that poor black slave is doing now. And for your country, boy," and the words rattled in his throat. "and for that flag," and he pointed to the ship, "never dream a dream but of serving her as she bids you, though the service carry you through a thousand hells. No matter what happens to you, no matter who flatters you or who abuses you, never look at another flag, never let a night pass but you pray God to bless that flag. Remember, boy, that behind all these men you have to do with, behind officers, and government, and people even, there is the Country Herself, your Country, and that you belong to Her as you belong to your own mother. Stand by Her, boy, as you would stand by your mother, if those devils there had got hold of her to-day!"

I was frightened to death by his calm, hard passion; but I blundered out that I would, by all that was holy, and that I had never thought of doing anything else. He hardly seemed to hear me; but he did, almost in a whisper, say: "O, if anybody had said so to me when I was of your age!"

I think it was this half-confidence of his, which I never abused, for I never told this story till now, which afterward made us great friends. He was very kind to me. Often he sat up, or even got up, at night, to walk the deck with me, when it was my watch. He explained to me a great deal of my mathematics, and I owe to him my taste for mathematics. He lent me books, and helped me about my reading. He never alluded so directly to his story again; but from one and another officer I have learned, in thirty years, what I

am telling. When we parted from him in St. Thomas harbour, at the end of our cruise, I was more sorry than I can tell. I was very glad to meet him again in 1830; and later in life, when I thought I had some influence in Washington, I moved heaven and earth to have him discharged. But it was like getting a ghost out of prison. They pretended there was no such man, and never was such a man. They will say so at the Department now! Perhaps they do not know. It will not be the first thing in the service of which the Department appears to know nothing!

There is a story that Nolan met Burr once on one of our vessels, when a party of Americans came on board in the Mediterranean. But this I believe to be a lie; or, rather, it is a myth, *ben trovato*, involving a tremendous blowing-up with which he sunk Burr,—asking him how he liked to be "without a country." But it is clear from Burr's life, that nothing of the sort could have happened; and I mention this only as an illustration of the stories which get a-going where there is the least mystery at bottom.

Philip Nolan, poor fellow, repented of his folly, and then, like a man, submitted to the fate he had asked for. He never intentionally added to the difficulty or delicacy of the charge of those who had him in hold. Accidents would happen; but never from his fault. Lieutenant Truxton told me that, when Texas was annexed, there was a careful discussion among the officers, whether they should get hold of Nolan's handsome set of maps and cut Texas out of it—from the map of the world and the map of Mexico. The United States had been cut out when the atlas was bought for him. But it was voted, rightly enough, that to do this would be virtually to reveal to him what had happened, or, as Harry Cole said, to make him think Old Burr had succeeded. So it was from no fault of Nolan's that a great

botch happened at my own table, when, for a short time, I was in command of the *George Washington* corvette, on the South American station. We were lying in the La Plata, and some of the officers, who had been on shore and had just joined again, were entertaining us with accounts of their misadventures in riding the half-wild horses of Buenos Ayres. Nolan was at table, and was in an unusually bright and talkative mood. Some story of a tumble reminded him of an adventure of his own when he was catching wild horses in Texas with his adventurous cousin, at a time when he must have been quite a boy. He told the story with a good deal of spirit—so much so, that the silence which often follows a good story hung over the table for an instant, to be broken by Nolan himself. For he asked perfectly unconsciously:

"Pray, what has become of Texas? After the Mexicans got their independence, I thought that province of Texas would come forward very fast. It is really one of the finest regions on earth; it is the Italy of this continent. But I have not seen or heard a word of Texas for nearly twenty years."

There were two Texan officers at the table. The reason he had never heard of Texas was that Texas and her affairs had been painfully cut out of his newspapers since Austin began his settlements; so that, while he read of Honduras and Tamaulipas, and, till quite lately, of California—this virgin province, in which his brother had travelled so far, and I believe, had died, had ceased to be to him. Waters and Williams, the two Texas men, looked grimly at each other and tried not to laugh. Edward Morris had his attention attracted by the third link in the chain of the captain's chandelier. Watrous was seized with a convulsion of sneezing. Nolan himself saw that something was to pay, he did not know what. And I, as master of the feast, had to say:

"Texas is out of the map, Mr. Nolan. Have you seen Captain Back's curious account of Sir Thomas Roe's Welcome?"

After that cruise I never saw Nolan again. I wrote to him at least twice a year, for in that voyage we became even confidentially intimate; but he never wrote to me. The other men tell me that in those fifteen years he *aged* very fast, as well he might indeed, but that he was still the same gentle, uncomplaining, silent sufferer that he ever was, bearing as best he could his self-appointed punishment—rather less social, perhaps, with new men whom he did not know, but more anxious, apparently, than ever to serve and befriend and teach the boys, some of whom fairly seemed to worship him. And now it seems the dear old fellow is dead. He has found a home at last, and a country.

Since writing this, and while considering whether or not I would print it, as a warning to the young Nolans and Vallandighams and Tatnalls of to-day of what it is to throw away a country, I have received from Danforth, who is on board the *Levant*, a letter which gives an account of Nolan's last hours. It removes all my doubts about telling this story.

The reader will understand Danforth's letter, or the beginning of it, if he will remember that after ten years of Nolan's exile everyone who had him in charge was in a very delicate position. The government had failed to renew the order of 1807 regarding him. What was a man to do? Should he let him go? What, then, if he were called to account by the Department for violating the order of 1807? Should he keep him? What, then, if Nolan should be liberated some day, and should bring an action of false imprisonment or kidnapping against every man who had had him in charge? I urged and pressed this upon Southard,

and I have reason to think that other officers did the same thing. But the Secretary always said, as they so often do at Washington, that there were no special orders to give, and that we must act on our own judgment. That means, "If you succeed, you will be sustained; if you fail, you will be disavowed." Well, as Danforth says, all that is over now, though I do not know but I expose myself to a criminal prosecution on the evidence of the very revelation I am making.

Here is the letter:

LEVANT, 2° 2′ S. at 131° W.

DEAR FRED:

I try to find heart and life to tell you that it is all over with dear old Nolan. I have been with him on this voyage more than I ever was, and I can understand wholly now the way in which you used to speak of the dear old fellow. I could see that he was not strong, but I had no idea the end was so near. The doctor has been watching him very carefully, and yesterday morning came to me and told me that Nolan was not so well, and had not left his state-room—a thing I never remember before. He had let the doctor come and see him as he lay there—the first time the doctor had been in the state-room—and he said he should like to see me. Oh, dear! do you remember the mysteries we boys used to invent about his room in the old *Intrepid* days? Well, I went in, and there, to be sure, the poor fellow lay in his berth, smiling pleasantly as he gave me his hand, but looking very frail. I could not help a glance round, which showed me what a little shrine he had made of the box he was lying in. The Stars and Stripes were triced up above and around a picture of Washington, and he had painted a majestic eagle, with lightnings blazing from his beak and his foot just clasping the whole globe, which his wings overshadowed. The dear old boy saw my glance, and said, with a sad smile, "Here, you see, I have a country!" And then he pointed to the foot of his bed, where I had not seen before a great map of the United States, as he had drawn it from memory, and which he had there to look upon as he lay. Quaint, queer old names were on it, in large letters: "Indiana Territory," "Mississippi Territory," and "Louisiana Territory," as

I suppose our fathers learned such things: but the old fellow had patched in Texas, too; he had carried his western boundary all the way to the Pacific, but on that shore he had defined nothing.

"O Captain," he said, "I know I am dying. I cannot get home. Surely you will tell me something now?—Stop! stop! Do not speak till I say what I am sure you know, that there is not in this ship, that there is not in America—God bless her!—a more loyal man than I. There cannot be a man who loves the old flag as I do, or prays for it as I do, or hopes for it as I do. There are thirty-four stars in it now, Danforth. I thank God for that, though I do not know what their names are. There has never been one taken away: I thank God for that. I know by that that there has never been any successful Burr, O Danforth, Danforth," he sighed out, "how like a wretched night's dream a boy's idea of personal fame or of separate sovereignty seems; when one looks back on it after such a life as mine! But tell me—tell me something—tell me everything, Danforth, before I die!"

Ingham, I swear to you that I felt like a monster that I had not told him everything before. Danger or no danger, delicacy or no delicacy, who was I, that I should have been acting the tyrant all this time over this dear, sainted old man, who had years ago expiated, in his whole manhood's life, the madness of a boy's treason? "Mr. Nolan," said I, "I will tell you everything you ask about. Only, where shall I begin?"

Oh, the blessed smile that crept over his white face! and he pressed my hand and said, "God bless you! Tell me their names," he said, and he pointed to the stars on the flag. "The last I know is Ohio. My father lived in Kentucky. But I have guessed Michigan and Indiana and Mississippi—that was where Fort Adams is—they make twenty. But where are your other fourteen? You have not cut up any of the old ones, I hope?"

Well, that was not a bad text, and I told him the names in as good order as I could, and he bade me take down his beautiful map and draw them in as I best could with my pencil. He was wild with delight about Texas, told me how his cousin died there; he had marked a gold cross near where he supposed his grave was; and he had guessed at Texas. Then he was delighted as he saw California and Oregon. —that, he said, he had suspected partly, because he had never been permitted to land on that shore, though the ships were there so much. "And the men," said he, laughing, "brought off a good deal beside

furs." Then he went back—heavens, how far!—to ask about the *Chesapeake*, and what was done to Barron for surrendering her to the *Leopard*, and whether Burr ever tried again—and he ground his teeth with the only passion he showed. But in a moment that was over, and he said, "God forgive me, for I am sure I forgive him." Then he asked about the old war—told me the true story of his serving the gun the day we took the *Java*—asked about dear old David Porter, as he called him. Then he settled down more quietly, and very happily, to hear me tell in an hour the history of fifty years.

How I wished it had been somebody who knew something! But I did as well as I could. I told him of the English war. I told him about Fulton and the steamboat beginning. I told him about old Scott, and Jackson; told him all I could think of about the Mississippi, and New Orleans, and Texas, and his own old Kentucky. And do you think, he asked who was in command of the "Legion of the West." I told him it was a very gallant officer named Grant, and that, by our last news, he was about to establish his headquarters at Vicksburg. Then, "Where was Vicksburg?" I worked that out on the map; it was about a hundred miles, more or less, above his old Fort Adams and I thought Fort Adams must be a ruin now. "It must be at old Vick's plantation, at Walnut Hills," said he: "well, that is a change!"

I tell you, Ingham, it was a hard thing to condense the history of half a century into that talk with a sick man. And I do not now know what I told him—of emigration, and the means of it—of steamboats, and railroads, and telegraphs—of inventions, and books, and literature—of the colleges, and West Point, and the Naval School—but with the queerest interruptions that ever you heard. You see it was Robinson Crusoe asking all the accumulated questions of fifty-six years!

I remember he asked, all of a sudden, who was President now; and when I told him, he asked if Old Abe was General Benjamin Lincoln's son. He said he met old General Lincoln, when he was quite a boy himself, at some Indian treaty. I said no, that Old Abe was a Kentuckian like himself, but I could not tell him of what family; he had worked up from the ranks. "Good for him!" cried Nolan; "I am glad of that. As I have brooded and wondered, I have thought our danger was in keeping up those regular successions in the first families." Then I got talking about my visit to Washington. I told him of meeting the Oregon Congressman, Harding; I told him about the Smith-

sonian, and the Exploring Expedition; I told him about the Capitol and the statues for the pediment, and Crawford's Liberty, and Greenough's Washington: Ingham, I told him everything I could think of that would show the grandeur of his country and its prosperity; but I could not make up my mouth to tell him a word about this infernal rebellion!

And he drank it in and enjoyed it as I cannot tell you. He grew more and more silent, yet I never thought he was tired or faint. I gave him a glass of water, but he just wet his lips, and told me not to go away. Then he asked me to bring the Presbyterian "Book of Public Prayer" which lay there, and said, with a smile, that it would open at the right place—and so it did. There was his double red mark down the page; and I knelt down and read, and he repeated with me, "For ourselves and our country, O gracious God, we thank Thee, that, notwithstanding our manifold transgressions of Thy holy laws, Thou hast continued to us Thy marvellous kindness," and so to the end of that thanksgiving. Then he turned to the end of the same book, and I read the words more familiar to me: "Most heartily we beseech Thee with Thy favour to behold and bless Thy servant, the President of the United States, and all others in authority"—and the rest of the Episcopal collect. "Danforth," said he "I have repeated these prayers night and morning, it is now fifty-five years." And then he said he would go to sleep. He bent me down over him and kissed me; and he said, "Look in my Bible, Captain, when I am gone." And I went away.

But I had no thought it was the end. I thought he was tired and would sleep. I knew he was happy, and I wanted him to be alone.

But in an hour, when the doctor went in gently, he found Nolan had breathed his life away with a smile. He had something pressed close to his lips. It was his father's badge of the Order of the Cincinnati.

We looked in his Bible, and there was a slip of paper at the place where he had marked the text—

"They desire a country, even a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city."

On this slip of paper he had written:

"Bury me in the sea; it has been my home, and I love it. But will not someone set up a stone for my memory at Fort Adams or at

Orleans, that my disgrace may not be more than I ought to bear? Say on it:

"*In Memory of*
"PHILIP NOLAN,
"*Lieutenant in the Army of the United States.*

"He loved his country as no other man has loved her; but no man deserved less at her hands."

IX

THE NÜRNBERG STOVE

AUGUST lived in a little town called Hall. Hall is a favourite name for several towns in Austria and in Germany; but this one especial little Hall, in the Upper Innthal, is one of the most charming Old-World places that I know, and August for his part did not know any other. It has the green meadows and the great mountains all about it, and the gray-green glacier-fed water rushes by it. It has paved streets and enchanting little shops that have all latticed panes and iron gratings to them; it has a very grand old Gothic church, that has the noblest blendings of light and shadow, and marble tombs of dead knights, and a look of infinite strength and repose as a church should have. Then there is the Muntze Tower, black and white, rising out of greenery and looking down on a long wooden bridge and the broad rapid river; and there is an old schloss which has been made into a guard-house, with battlements and frescoes and heraldic devices in gold and colours, and a man-at-arms carved in stone standing life-size in his niche and bearing his date 1530. A little farther on, but close at hand, is a cloister with beautiful marble columns and tombs, and a colossal wood-carved Calvary, and beside that a small and very rich chapel: indeed, so full is the little town of the undisturbed past, that to walk in it is like opening a missal of the Middle Ages, all emblazoned and illuminated with saints and warriors, and it is so clean, and so still, and so noble, by reason of its monuments and its

historic colour, that I marvel much no one has ever cared to sing its praises. The old pious heroic life of an age at once more restful and more brave than ours still leaves its spirit there, and then there is the girdle of the mountains all around, and that alone means strength, peace, majesty.

In this little town a few years ago August Strehla lived with his people in the stone-paved irregular square where the grand church stands.

He was a small boy of nine years at that time—a chubby-faced little man with rosy cheeks, big hazel eyes, and clusters of curls the brown of ripe nuts. His mother was dead, his father was poor, and there were many mouths at home to feed. In this country the winters are long and very cold, the whole land lies wrapped in snow for many months, and this night that he was trotting home, with a jug of beer in his numb red hands, was terribly cold and dreary. The good burghers of Hall had shut their double shutters, and the few lamps there were flickered dully behind their quaint, old-fashioned iron casings. The mountains indeed were beautiful, all snow-white under the stars that are so big in frost. Hardly anyone was astir; a few good souls wending home from vespers, a tired post-boy who blew a shrill blast from his tasseled horn as he pulled up his sledge before a hostelry, and little August hugging his jug of beer to his ragged sheepskin coat, were all who were abroad, for the snow fell heavily and the good folks of Hall go early to their beds. He could not run, or he would have spilled the beer; he was half frozen and a little frightened, but he kept up his courage by saying over and over again to himself, "I shall soon be at home with dear Hirschvogel."

He went on through the streets, past the stone man-at-arms of the guard-house, and so into the place where the

great church was, and where near it stood his father Karl Strehla's house, with a sculptured Bethlehem over the doorway, and the Pilgrimage of the Three Kings painted on its wall. He had been sent on a long errand outside the gates in the afternoon, over the frozen fields and broad white snow, and had been belated, and had thought he had heard the wolves behind him at every step, and had reached the town in a great state of terror, thankful with all his little panting heart to see the oil-lamp burning under the first house-shrine. But he had not forgotten to call for the beer, and he carried it carefully now, though his hands were so numb that he was afraid they would let the jug down every moment.

The snow outlined with white every gable and cornice of the beautiful old wooden houses; the moonlight shone on the gilded signs, the lambs, the grapes, the eagles, and all the quaint devices that hung before the doors; covered lamps burned before the Nativities and Crucifixions painted on the walls or let into the wood-work; here and there, where a shutter had not been closed, a ruddy fire-light lit up a homely interior, with the noisy band of children clustering round the house-mother and a big brown loaf, or some gossips spinning and listening to the cobbler's or the barber's story of a neighbour, while the oil-wicks glimmered, and the hearth-logs blazed, and the chestnuts sputtered in their iron roasting-pot. Little August saw all these things as he saw everything with his two big bright eyes that had such curious lights and shadows in them; but he went heedfully on his way for the sake of the beer which a single slip of the foot would make him spill. At his knock and call the solid oak door, four centuries old if one, flew open, and the boy darted in with his beer, and shouted, with all the force of mirthful lungs,

"Oh, dear Hirschvogel, but for the thought of you I should have died!"

It was a large barren room into which he rushed with so much pleasure, and the bricks were bare and uneven. It had a walnut-wood press, handsome and very old, a broad deal table, and several wooden stools for all its furniture; but at the top of the chamber, sending out warmth and colour together as the lamp sheds its rays upon it, was a tower of porcelain, burnished with all the hues of a king's peacock and a queen's jewels, and surmounted with armed figures, and shields, and flowers of heraldry, and a great golden crown upon the highest summit of all.

It was a stove of 1532, and on it were the letters H. R. H., for it was in every portion the handwork of the great potter of Nürnberg, Augustin Hirschvogel, who put his mark thus, as all the world knows.

The stove no doubt had stood in palaces and been made for princes, had warmed the crimson stockings of cardinals and the gold-broidered shoes of archduchesses, had glowed in presence-chambers and lent its carbon to help kindle sharp brains in anxious councils of state; no one knew what it had been or done or been fashioned for; but it was a right royal thing. Yet perhaps it had never been more useful than it was now in this poor desolate room, sending down heat and comfort into the troop of children tumbled together on a wolfskin at its feet, who received frozen August among them with loud shouts of joy.

"O, dear Hirschvogel, I am so cold, so cold!" said August, kissing its gilded lion's claws. "Is father not in, Dorothea?"

"No, dear. He is late."

Dorothea was a girl of seventeen, dark-haired and serious, and with a sweet, sad face, for she had had many cares laid

on her shoulders, even whilst still a mere baby. She was the eldest of the Strehla family; and there were ten of them in all. Next to her there came Jan and Karl and Otho, big lads, gaining a little for their own living; and then came August, who went up in the summer to the high Alps with the farmers' cattle, but in winter could do nothing to fill his own little platter and pot; and then all the little ones, who could only open their mouths to be fed like young birds—Albrecht and Hilda, and Waldo and Christof, and last of all little three-year-old Ermengilda, with eyes like forget-me-nots, whose birth had cost them the life of their mother.

They were of that mixed race, half Austrian, half Italian, so common in the Tyrol; some of the children were white and golden as lilies, others were brown and brilliant as fresh-fallen chestnuts. The father was a good man, but weak and weary with so many to find for and so little to do it with. He worked at the salt-furnaces, and by that gained a few florins; people said he would have worked better and kept his family more easily if he had not loved his pipe and a draught of ale too well; but this had only been said of him after his wife's death, when trouble and perplexity had begun to dull a brain never too vigorous, and to enfeeble further a character already too yielding. As it was, the wolf often bayed at the door of the Strehla household, without a wolf from the mountains coming down. Dorothea was one of those maidens who **almost** work miracles, so far can their industry and care and intelligence make a home sweet and wholesome and a single loaf seem to swell into twenty. The children were always clean and happy, and the table was seldom without its big pot of soup once a day. Still, very poor they were, and Dorothea's heart ached with shame, for she knew that their father's debts were many for flour and meat and clothing. Of fuel to feed the big stove

they had always enough without cost, for their mother's father was alive, and sold wood and fir cones and coke, and never grudged them to his grandchildren, though he grumbled at Strehla's improvidence and hapless, dreamy ways.

"Father says we are never to wait for him: we will have supper, now you have come home, dear," said Dorothea, who, however she might fret her soul in secret as she knitted their hose and mended their shirts, never let her anxieties cast a gloom on the children; only to August she did speak a little sometimes, because he was so thoughtful and so tender of her always, and knew as well as she did that there were troubles about money—though these troubles were vague to them both, and the debtors were patient and kindly, being neighbours all in the old twisting streets between the guard-house and the river.

Supper was a huge bowl of soup, with big slices of brown bread swimming in it and some onions bobbing up and down: the bowl was soon emptied by ten wooden spoons, and then the three eldest boys slipped off to bed, being tired with their rough bodily labour in the snow all day, and Dorothea drew her spinning-wheel by the stove and set it whirring, and the little ones got August down upon the old worn wolfskin and clamoured to him for a picture or a story. For August was the artist of the family.

He had a piece of planed deal that his father had given him, and some sticks of charcoal, and he would draw a hundred things he had seen in the day, sweeping each out with his elbow when the children had seen enough of it and sketching another in its stead—faces and dogs' heads, and men in sledges, and old women in their furs, and pine-trees, and cocks and hens, and all sorts of animals, and now and then—very reverently—a Madonna and Child. It was all very rough, for there was no one to teach him anything.

But it was all life-like, and kept the whole troop of children shrieking with laughter, or watching breathless, with wide open, wondering, awed eyes.

They were all so happy: what did they care for the snow outside? Their little bodies were warm, and their hearts merry; even Dorothea, troubled about the bread for the morrow, laughed as she spun; and August, with all his soul in his work, and little rosy Ermengilda's cheek on his shoulder, glowing after his frozen afternoon, cried out loud, smiling, as he looked up at the stove that was shedding its head down on them all:

"Oh, dear Hirschvogel! you are almost as great and good as the sun! No; you are greater and better, I think, because he goes away nobody knows where all these long, dark, cold hours, and does not care how people die for want of him; but you—you are always ready: just a little bit of wood to feed you, and you will make a summer for us all the winter through!"

The grand old stove seemed to smile through all its iridescent surface at the praises of the child. No doubt the stove, though it had known three centuries and more, had known but very little gratitude.

It was one of those magnificent stoves in enamelled faïence which so excited the jealousy of the other potters of Nürnberg that in a body they demanded of the magistracy that Augustin Hirschvogel should be forbidden to make any more of them—the magistracy, happily, proving of a broader mind, and having no sympathy with the wish of the artisans to cripple their greater fellow.

It was of great height and breadth, with all the majolica lustre which Hirschvogel learned to give to his enamels when he was making love to the young Venetian girl whom he afterwards married. There was the statue of a king at

each corner, modelled with as much force and splendour as his friend Albrecht Dürer could have given unto them on copperplate or canvas. The body of the stove itself was divided into panels, which had the Ages of Man painted on them in polychrome; the borders of the panels had roses and holly and laurel and other foliage, and German mottoes in black letter of odd Old-World moralising, such as the old Teutons, and the Dutch after them, love to have on their chimney-places and their drinking cups, their dishes and flagons. The whole was burnished with gilding in many parts, and was radiant everywhere with that brilliant colouring of which the Hirschvogel family, painters on glass and great in chemistry as they were, were all masters.

The stove was a very grand thing, as I say: possibly Hirschvogel had made it for some mighty lord of the Tyrol at that time when he was an imperial guest at Innspruck and fashioned so many things for the Schloss Amras and beautiful Philippine Welser, the Burgher's daughter, who gained an Archduke's heart by her beauty and the right to wear his honours by her wit. Nothing was known of the stove at this latter day in Hall. The grandfather Strehla, who had been a master-mason, had dug it up out of some ruins where he was building, and, finding it without a flaw, had taken it home, and only thought it worth finding because it was such a good one to burn. That was now sixty years past, and ever since then the stove had stood in the big desolate empty room, warming three generations of the Strehla family, and having seen nothing prettier perhaps in all its many years than the children tumbled now in a cluster like gathered flowers at its feet. For the Strehla children, born to nothing else, were all born to beauty; white or brown, they were equally lovely to look upon, and when they went into the church to mass, with their curling

locks and their clasped hands, they stood under the grim statues like cherubs flown down off some fresco.

"Tell us a story, August," they cried, in chorus, when they had seen charcoal pictures till they were tired; and August did as he did every night, pretty nearly, looked up at the stove and told them what he imagined of the many adventures and joys and sorrows of the human being who figured on the panels from his cradle to his grave.

To the children the stove was a household god. In summer they laid a mat of fresh moss all round it, and dressed it up with green boughs and the numberless beautiful wild flowers of the Tyrol country. In winter all their joys centred in it, and scampering home from school over the ice and snow they were happy, knowing that they would soon be cracking nuts or roasting chestnuts in the broad ardent glow of its noble tower, which rose eight feet high above them with all its spires and pinnacles and crowns.

Once a travelling peddler had told them that the letters on it meant Augustin Hirschvogel, and that Hirschvogel had been a great German potter and painter, like his father before him, in the art-sanctified city of Nürnberg, and had made many such stoves, that were all miracles of beauty and of workmanship, putting all his heart and his soul and his faith into his labours, as the men of those earlier ages did, and thinking but little of gold or praise.

An old trader, too, who sold curiosities not far from the church, had told August a little more about the brave family of Hirschvogel, whose houses can be seen in Nürnberg to this day; of old Veit, the first of them, who painted the Gothic windows of St. Sebald with the marriage of the Margravine; of his sons and of his grandsons, potters, painters, engravers all, and chief of them great Augustin, the Luca della Robbia of the North. And August's imagina-

tion, always quick, had made a living personage out of these few records, and saw Hirschvogel as though he were in the flesh walking up and down the Maximilian-Strass in his visit to Innspruck, and maturing beautiful things in his brain as he stood on the bridge and gazed on the emerald-green flood of the Inn.

So the stove had got to be called Hirschvogel in the family, as if it were a living creature, and little August was very proud because he had been named after that famous old dead German who had had the genius to make so glorious a thing. All the children loved the stove, but with August the love of it was a passion; and in his secret heart he used to say to himself, "When I am a man, I will make just such things too, and then I will set Hirschvogel in a beautiful room in a house that I will build myself in Innspruck just outside the gates, where the chestnuts are, by the river: that is what I will do when I am a man."

For August, a salt-baker's son and a little cow-keeper when he was anything, was a dreamer of dreams, and when he was upon the high Alps with his cattle, with the stillness and the sky around him, was quite certain that he would live for greater things than driving the herds up when the springtide came among the blue sea of gentians, or toiling down in the town with wood and with timber as his father and grandfather did every day of their lives. He was a strong and healthy little fellow, fed on the free mountain-air, and he was very happy, and loved his family devotedly, and was as active as a squirrel and as playful as a hare: but he kept his thoughts to himself, and some of them went a very long way for a little boy who was only one among many, and to whom nobody had ever paid any attention except to teach him his letters and tell him to fear God. August in winter was only a little, hungry schoolboy,

trotting to be catechised by the priest, or to bring the loaves from the bake-house, or to carry his father's boots to the cobbler; and in summer he was only one of hundreds of cow-boys, who drove the poor, half-blind, blinking, stumbling cattle, ringing their throat-bells, out into the sweet intoxication of the sudden sunlight, and lived up with them in the heights among the Alpine roses, with only the clouds and the snow-summits near. But he was always thinking, thinking, thinking, for all that; and under his little sheepskin winter coat and his rough hempen summer shirt his heart had as much courage in it as Hofer's ever had—great Hofer, who is a household word in all the Innthal, and whom August always reverently remembered when he went to the city of Innspruck and ran out by the foaming water-mill and under the wooded height of Berg Isel.

August lay now in the warmth of the stove and told the children stories, his own little brown face growing red with excitement as his imagination glowed to fever heat. That human being on the panels, who was drawn there as a baby in a cradle, as a boy playing among flowers, as a lover sighing under a casement, as a soldier in the midst of strife, as a father with children round him, as a weary, old, blind man on crutches, and, lastly, as a ransomed soul raised up by angels, had always had the most intense interest for August, and he had made, not one history for him, but a thousand; he seldom told them the same tale twice. He had never seen a story-book in his life; his primer and his mass-book were all the volumes he had. But nature had given him Fancy, and she is a good fairy that makes up for the want of very many things! only, alas! her wings are so very soon broken, poor thing, and then she is of no use at all.

"It is time for you all to go to bed, children," said

Dorothea, looking up from her spinning. "Father is very late to-night; you must not sit up for him."

"Oh, five minutes more, dear Dorothea!" they pleaded; and little rosy and golden Ermengilda climbed up into her lap. "Hirschvogel is so warm, the beds are never so warm as he. Cannot you tell us another tale, August?"

"No," cried August, whose face had lost its light, now that his story had come to an end, and who sat serious, with his hands clasped on his knees, gazing on to the luminous arabesques of the stove.

"It is only a week to Christmas," he said, suddenly.

"Grandmother's big cakes!" chuckled little Christof, who was five years old, and thought Christmas meant a big cake and nothing else.

"What will Santa Claus find for 'Gilda if she be good?" murmured Dorothea over the child's sunny head; for, however hard poverty might pinch, it could never pinch so tightly that Dorothea would not find some wooden toy and some rosy apples to put in her little sister's socks.

"Father Max has promised me a big goose, because I saved the calf's life in June," said August; it was the twentieth time he had told them so that month, he was so proud of it.

"And Aunt Maïla will be sure to send us wine and honey and a barrel of flour; she always does," said Albrecht. Their aunt Maïla had a châlet and a little farm over on the green slopes toward Dorf Ampas.

"I shall go up into the woods and get Hirschvogel's crown," said August; they always crowned Hirschvogel for Christmas with pine boughs and ivy and mountain-berries. The heat soon withered the crown; but it was part of the religion of the day to them, as much so as it was to

cross themselves in church and raise their voices in the "O Salutaris Hostia."

And they fell chatting of all they would do on the Christmas night, and one little voice piped loud against another's, and they were as happy as though their stockings would be full of golden purses and jewelled toys, and the big goose in the soup-pot seemed to them such a meal as kings would envy.

In the midst of their chatter and laughter a blast of frozen air and a spray of driven snow struck like ice through the room, and reached them even in the warmth of the old wolf-skins and the great stove. It was the door which had opened and let in the cold; it was their father who had come home.

The younger children ran joyous to meet him. Dorothea pushed the one wooden arm-chair of the room to the stove, and August flew to set the jug of beer on a little round table, and fill a long clay pipe; for their father was good to them all, and seldom raised his voice in anger, and they had been trained by the mother they had loved to dutifulness and obedience and a watchful affection.

To-night Karl Strehla responded very wearily to the young ones' welcome, and came to the wooden chair with a tired step and sat down heavily, not noticing either pipe or beer.

"Are you not well, dear father?" his daughter asked him.

"I am well enough," he answered, dully and sat there with his head bent, letting the lighted pipe grow cold.

He was a fair, tall man, gray before his time, and bowed with labour.

"Take the children to bed," he said, suddenly, at last, and Dorothea obeyed. August stayed behind, curled before the stove; at nine years old, and when one earns money in the summer from the farmers, one is not altogether a child any more, at least in one's own estimation.

August did not heed his father's silence: he was used to it. Karl Strehla was a man of few words, and, being of weakly health, was usually too tired at the end of the day to do more than drink his beer and sleep. August lay on the wolfskin dreamy and comfortable, looking up through his drooping eyelids at the golden coronets on the crest of the great stove, and wondering for the millionth time whom it had been made for, and what grand places and scenes it had known.

Dorothea came down from putting the little ones in their beds; the cuckoo-clock in the corner struck eight; she looked to her father and the untouched pipe, then sat down to her spinning, saying nothing. She thought he had been drinking in some tavern; it had been often so with him of late.

There was a long silence; the cuckoo called the quarter twice; August dropped asleep, his curls falling over his face; Dorothea's wheel hummed like a cat.

Suddenly Karl Strehla struck his hand on the table, sending the pipe to the ground.

"I have sold Hirschvogel," he said; and his voice was husky and ashamed in his throat. The spinning-wheel stopped. August sprang erect out of his sleep.

"Sold Hirschvogel!" If their father had dashed the holy crucifix on the floor at their feet and spat on it, they could not have shuddered under the horror of a greater blasphemy.

"I have sold Hirschvogel!" said Karl Strehla, in the same husky, dogged voice. "I have sold it to a travelling trader in such things for two hundred florins. What would you?—I owe double that. He saw it this morning when you were all out. He will pack it and take it to Munich to-morrow."

Dorothea gave a low shrill cry:

"Oh, father?—the children—in midwinter!"

She turned white as the snow without; her words died away in her throat.

August stood, half blind with sleep, staring with dazed eyes as his cattle stared at the sun when they came out from their winter's prison.

"It is not true. It is not true!" he muttered. "You are jesting, father?"

Strehla broke into a dreary laugh.

"It is true. Would you like to know what is true too? that the bread you eat, and the meat you put in this pot, and the roof you have over your heads, are none of them paid for, have been none of them paid for, for months and months; if it had not been for your grandfather I should have been in prison all summer and autumn, and he is out of patience and will do no more now. There is no work to be had; the masters go to younger men: they say I work ill; it may be so. Who can keep his head above water with ten hungry children dragging him down? When your mother lived it was different. Boy, you stare at me as if I were a mad dog! You have made a god of yon china thing. Well—it goes; goes to-morrow. Two hundred florins, that is something. It will keep me out of prison for a little and with the spring things may turn——"

August stood like a creature paralysed. His eyes were wide open, fastened on his father's with terror and incredulous horror; his face had grown as white as his sister's; his chest heaved with tearless sobs.

"It is not true! It is not true!" he echoed stupidly. It seemed to him that the very skies must fall, and the earth perish, if they could take away Hirschvogel. They might as soon talk of tearing down God's sun out of the heavens.

"You will find it true," said his father, doggedly, and angered because he was in his own soul bitterly ashamed to

have bartered away the heirloom and treasure of his race, and the comfort and healthgiver of his young children. "You will find it true. The dealer has paid me half the money to-night, and will pay me the other half to-morrow when he packs it up and takes it away to Munich. No doubt it is worth a great deal more—at least I suppose so, as he gives that—but beggars cannot be choosers. The little black stove in the kitchen will warm you all just as well. Who would keep a gilded, painted thing in a poor house like this, when one can make two hundred florins by it? Dorothea, you never sobbed more when your mother died. What is it, when all is said?—a bit of hardware, much too grand-looking for such a room as this. If all the Strehlas had not been born fools it would have been sold a century ago, when it was dug up out of the ground. "It is a stove for a museum," the trader said when he saw it. "To a museum let it go."

August gave a shrill shriek like a hare's when it is caught for its death, and threw himself on his knees at his father's feet.

"Oh, father, father!" he cried, convulsively, his hands closing on Strehla's knees, and his uplifted face blanched and distorted with terror. "Oh, father, dear father, you cannot mean what you say? Send *it* away—our life, our sun, our joy, our comfort? we shall all die in the dark and the cold. Sell *me* rather. Sell me to any trade or any pain you like; I will not mind. But Hirschvogel! it is like selling the very cross off the altar! You must be in jest. You could not do such a thing—you could not— you who have always been gentle and good, and who have sat in the warmth here year after year with our mother. It is not a piece of hardware, as you say; it is a living thing, for a great man's thoughts and fancies have put life into it, and it loves, us

though we are only poor little children, and we love it with all our hearts and souls, and up in heaven I am sure the dead Hirschvogel knows! Oh, listen; I will go and try and get work to-morrow; I will ask them to let me cut ice or make the paths through the snow. There must be something I could do, and I will beg the people we owe money to, to wait; they are all neighbours, they will be patient. But sell Hirschvogel! oh, never! never! never! Give the florins back to the vile man. Tell him it would be like selling the shroud out of mother's coffin, or the golden curls off Ermengilda's head! Oh, father, dear father! do hear me, for pity's sake!"

Strehla was moved by the boy's anguish. He loved his children, though he was often weary of them, and their pain was pain to him. But beside emotion, and stronger than emotion, was the anger that August roused in him: he hated and despised himself for the barter of the heirloom of his race, and every word of the child stung him with a stinging sense of shame.

And he spoke in his wrath rather than in his sorrow.

"You are a little fool," he said, harshly, as they had never heard him speak. "You rave like a play-actor. Get up and go to bed. The stove is sold. There is no more to be said. Children like you have nothing to do with such matters. The stove is sold, and goes to Munich to-morrow. What is it to you? Be thankful I can get bread for you. Get on your legs, I say, and go to bed."

Strehla took up the jug of ale as he paused, and drained it slowly as a man who had no cares.

August sprang to his feet and threw his hair back off his face; the blood rushed into his cheeks, making them scarlet: his great soft eyes flamed alight with furious passion.

"You *dare* not!" he cried, aloud, "you dare not sell it, I say! It is not yours alone; it is ours——"

Strehla flung the emptied jug on the bricks with a force that shivered it to atoms, and, rising to his feet, struck his son a blow that felled him to the floor. It was the first time in all his life that he had ever raised his hand against any one of his children.

Then he took the oil-lamp that stood at his elbow and stumbled off to his own chamber with a cloud before his eyes.

"What has happened?" said August, a little while later, as he opened his eyes and saw Dorothea weeping above him on the wolfskin before the stove. He had been struck backward, and his head had fallen on the hard bricks where the wolfskin did not reach. He sat up a moment, with his face bent upon his hands.

"I remember now," he said, very low, under his breath.

Dorothea showered kisses on him, while her tears fell like rain.

"But, oh, dear, how could you speak so to father?" she murmured. "It was very wrong."

"No, I was right," said August, and his little mouth, that hitherto had only curled in laughter, curved downward with a fixed and bitter seriousness. "How dare he? How dare he?" he muttered, with his head sunk in his hands. "It is not his alone. It belongs to us all. It is as much yours and mine as it is his."

Dorothea could only sob in answer. She was too frightened to speak. The authority of their parents in the house had never in her remembrance been questioned.

"Are you hurt by the fall dear August?" she murmured, at length, for he looked to her so pale and strange.

"Yes—no. I do not know. What does it matter?"

He sat up upon the wolfskin with passionate pain upon his face; all his soul was in rebellion, and he was only a child and was powerless.

"It is a sin; it is a theft; it is an infamy," he said slowly, his eyes fastened on the gilded feet of Hirschvogel.

"Oh, August, do not say such things of father!" sobbed his sister. "Whatever he does, *we* ought to think it right."

August laughed aloud.

"Is it right that he should spend his money in drink?—that he should let orders lie unexecuted?—that he should do his work so ill that no one cares to employ him?—that he should live on grandfather's charity, and then dare sell a thing that is ours every whit as much as it is his? To sell Hirschvogel! Oh, dear God! I would sooner sell my soul!"

"August!" cried Dorothea, with piteous entreaty. He terrified her, she could not recognise her little, gay, gentle brother in those fierce and blasphemous words.

August laughed aloud again; then all at once his laughter broke down into bitterest weeping. He threw himself forward on the stove, covering it with kisses, and sobbing as though his heart would burst from his bosom.

What could he do? Nothing, nothing, nothing!

"August, dear August," whispered Dorothea piteously, and trembling all over—for she was a very gentle girl, and fierce feeling terrified her—"August, do not lie there. Come to bed: it is quite late. In the morning you will be calmer. It is horrible indeed, and we shall die of cold, at least the little ones; but if it be father's will——"

"Let me alone," said August, through his teeth, striving to still the storm of sobs that shook him from head to foot. "Let me alone. In the morning!—how can you speak of the morning?"

"Come to bed, dear," sighed his sister. "Oh, August,

do not lie and look like that! you frighten me. Do come to bed."

"I shall stay here."

"Here! all night!"

"They might take it in the night. Besides, to leave it *now*."

"But it is cold! the fire is out."

"It will never be warm any more, nor shall we."

All his childhood had gone out of him, all his gleeful, careless, sunny temper had gone with it; he spoke sullenly and wearily, choking down the great sobs in his chest. To him it was as if the end of the world had come.

His sister lingered by him while striving to persuade him to go to his place in the little crowded bedchamber with Albrecht and Waldo and Christof. But it was in vain. "I shall stay here," was all he answered her. And he stayed—all the night long.

The lamps went out; the rats came and ran across the floor; as the hours crept on through midnight and past, the cold intensified and the air of the room grew like ice. August did not move; he lay with his face downward on the golden and rainbow hued pedestal of the household treasure, which henceforth was to be cold for evermore, an exiled thing in a foreign city in a far-off land.

Whilst yet it was dark his three elder brothers came down the stairs and let themselves out, each bearing his lantern and going to his work in stone-yard and timber-yard and at the salt-works. They did not notice him; they did not know what had happened.

A little later his sister came down with a light in her hand to make ready the house ere morning should break.

She stole up to him and laid her hand on his shoulder timidly.

"Dear August, you must be frozen. August, do look up! do speak!"

August raised his eyes with a wild, feverish, sullen look in them that she had never seen there. His face was ashen white: his lips were like fire. He had not slept all night; but his passionate sobs had given way to delirious waking dreams and numb senseless trances, which had alternated one on another all through the freezing, lonely, horrible hours.

"It will never be warm again," he muttered, "never again!"

Dorothea clasped him with trembling hands.

"August! do you not know me!" she cried, in an agony. "I am Dorothea. Wake up, dear—wake up! It is morning, only so dark!

August shuddered all over.

"The morning!" he echoed.

He slowly rose up on to his feet.

"I will go to grandfather," he said, very low. "He is always good: perhaps he could save it."

Loud blows with the heavy iron knocker of the house-door drowned his words. A strange voice called aloud through the keyhole:

"Let me in! Quick!—there is no time to lose! More snow like this, and the roads will be all blocked. Let me in. Do you hear? I am come to take the great stove."

August sprang erect, his fists doubled, his eyes blazing.

"You shall never touch it!" he screamed; "you shall never touch it!"

"Who shall prevent us?" laughed a big man, who was a Bavarian, amused at the fierce little figure fronting him.

"I!" said August. "You shall never have it! you shall kill me first!"

"Strehla," said the big man, as August's father entered the room, "you have got a little mad dog here: muzzle him."

One way and another they did muzzle him. He fought like a little demon, and hit out right and left, and one of his blows gave the Bavarian a black eye. But he was soon mastered by four grown men, and his father flung him with no light hand out from the door of the back entrance, and the buyers of the stately and beautiful stove set to work to pack it heedfully and carry it away.

When Dorothea stole out to look for August, he was nowhere in sight. She went back to little 'Gilda, who was ailing, and sobbed over the child, whilst the others stood looking on, dimly understanding that with Hirschvogel was going all the warmth of their bodies, all the light of their hearth.

Even their father now was very sorry and ashamed; but two hundred florins seemed a big sum to him, and, after all, he thought the children could warm themselves quite as well at the black iron stove in the kitchen. Besides, whether he regretted it now or not, the work of the Nürnberg potter was sold irrevocably, and he had to stand still and see the men from Munich wrap it in manifold wrappings and bear it out into the snowy air to where an ox-cart stood in waiting for it.

In another moment Hirschvogel was gone—gone forever and aye.

August stood still for a time, leaning, sick and faint from the violence that had been used to him, against the back wall of the house. The wall looked on a court where a well was, and the backs of other houses, and beyond them the spire of the Muntze Tower and the peaks of the mountains.

Into the court an old neighbour hobbled for water, and, seeing the boy, said to him:

"Child, is it true your father is selling the big painted stove?"

August nodded his head, then burst into a passion of tears.

"Well, for sure he is a fool," said the neighbour. "Heaven forgive me for calling him so before his own child! but the stove was worth a mint of money. I do remember in my young days, in old Anton's time (that was your great-grandfather, my lad), a stranger from Vienna saw it, and said that it was worth its weight in gold."

August's sobs went on their broken, impetuous course.

"I loved it! I loved it!" he moaned. "I do not care what its value was. I loved it! *I loved it!*"

"You little simpleton!" said the old man, kindly. "But you are wiser than your father, when all's said. If sell it he must, he should have taken it to good Herr Steiner over at Sprüz, who would have given him honest value. But no doubt they took him over his beer, ay, ay! but if I were you I would do better than cry. I would go after it."

August raised his head, the tears raining down his cheeks.

"Go after it when you are bigger," said the neighbour, with a good-natured wish to cheer him up a little. "The world is a small thing after all: I was a travelling clock-maker once upon a time, and I know that your stove will be safe enough whoever gets it; anything that can be sold for a round sum is always wrapped up in cotton wool by everybody. Ay, ay, don't cry so much; you will see your stove again some day."

Then the old man hobbled away to draw his brazen pail full of water at the well.

August remained leaning against the wall; his head was buzzing and his heart fluttering with the new idea which had presented itself to his mind. "Go after it," had said the old man. He thought, "Why not go with it?" He loved

it better than anyone, even better than Dorothea; and he shrank from the thought of meeting his father again, his father who had sold Hirschvogel.

He was by this time in that state of exaltation in which the impossible looks quite natural and commonplace. His tears were still wet on his pale cheeks, but they had ceased to fall. He ran out of the court-yard by a little gate, and across to the huge Gothic porch of the church. From there he could watch unseen his father's house-door, at which were always hanging some blue-and-gray pitchers, such as are common and so picturesque in Austria, for a part of the house was let to a man who dealt in pottery.

He hid himself in the grand portico, which he had so often passed through to go to mass or compline within, and presently his heart gave a great leap, for he saw the straw-enwrapped stove brought out and laid with infinite care on the bullock-dray. Two of the Bavarian men mounted beside it, and the sleigh-wagon slowly crept over the snow of the place—snow crisp and hard as stone. The noble old minster looked its grandest and most solemn, with its dark-gray stone and its vast archways, and its porch that was itself as big as many a church, and its strange gargoyles and lamp-irons black against the snow on its roof and on the pavement; but for once August had no eyes for it; he only watched for his old friend. Then he, a little unnoticeable figure enough, like a score of other boys in Hall, crept, unseen by any of his brothers or sisters, out of the porch and over the shelving uneven square, and followed in the wake of the dray.

Its course lay toward the station of the railway, which is close to the salt-works, whose smoke at times sullies this part of clean little Hall, though it does not do very much damage. From Hall the iron road runs northward through

glorious country to Salzburg, Vienna, Prague, Buda, and southward over the Brenner into Italy. Was Hirschvogel going north or south? This at least he would soon know.

August had often hung about the little station, watching the trains come and go and dive into the heart of the hills and vanish. No one said anything to him for idling about; people are kind-hearted and easy of temper in this pleasant land, and children and dogs are both happy there. He heard the Bavarians arguing and vociferating a great deal, and learned that they meant to go too and wanted to go with the great stove itself. But this they could not do, for neither could the stove go by a passenger train nor they themselves go in a goods-train. So at length they insured their precious burden for a large sum, and consented to send it by a luggage train which was to pass through Hall in half an hour. The swift trains seldom deign to notice the existence of Hall at all.

August heard, and a desperate resolve made itself up in his little mind. Where Hirschvogel went would he go. He gave one terrible thought to Dorothea—poor, gentle Dorothea!—sitting in the cold at home, then set to work to execute his project. How he managed it he never knew very clearly himself, but certain it is that when the goods-train from the north, that had come all the way from Linz on the Danube, moved out of Hall, August was hidden behind the stove in the great covered truck, and wedged, unseen and undreamt of by any human creature, amidst the cases of wood-carving, of clocks and clock-work, of Vienna toys, of Turkish carpets, of Russian skins, of Hungarian wines, which shared the same abode as did his swathed and bound Hirschvogel. No doubt he was very naughty, but it never occurred to him that he was so: his whole mind and soul were absorbed in the one entrancing idea, to follow his beloved friend and fire-king.

It was very dark in the closed truck, which had only a little window above the door; and it was crowded, and had a strong smell in it from the Russian hides and the hams that were in it. But August was not frightened; he was close to Hirschvogel, and presently he meant to be closer still; for he meant to do nothing less than get inside Hirschvogel itself. Being a shrewd little boy, and having had by great luck two silver groschen in his breeches-pocket, which he had earned the day before by chopping wood, he had bought some bread and sausage at the station of a woman there who knew him, and who thought he was going out to his uncle Joachim's châlet above Jenbach. This he had with him, and this he ate in the darkness and the lumbering, pounding, thundering noise which made him giddy, as never had he been in a train of any kind before. Still he ate, having had no breakfast, and being a child, and half a German, and not knowing at all how or when he ever would eat again.

When he had eaten, not as much as he wanted, but as much as he thought was prudent (for who could say when he would be able to buy anything more?), he set to work like a little mouse to make a hole in the withes of straw and hay which enveloped the stove. If it had been put in a packing-case he would have been defeated at the onset. As it was, he gnawed, and nibbled, and pulled, and pushed, just as a mouse would have done, making his hole where he guessed that the opening of the stove was—the opening through which he had so often thrust the big oak logs to feed it. No one disturbed him; the heavy train went lumbering on and on, and he saw nothing at all of the beautiful mountains, and shining waters, and great forests through which he was being carried. He was hard at work getting through the straw and hay and twisted ropes; and get through them at

last he did, and found the door of the stove, which he knew so well, and which was quite large enough for a child of his age to slip through, and it was this which he had counted upon doing. Slip through he did, as he had often done at home for fun, and curled himsel up there to see if he could anyhow remain during many hours. He found that he could; air came in through the brass fretwork of the stove; and with admirable caution in such a little fellow he leaned out, drew the hay and straw together, rearranged the ropes, so that no one could ever have dreamed a little mouse had been at them. Then he curled himself up again, this time more like a dormouse than anything else; and, being safe inside his dear Hirschvogel and intensely cold, he went fast asleep as if he were in his own bed at home with Albrecht, and Christof on either side of him. The train lumbered on, stopped often and long, as the habit of goods-trains is, sweeping the snow away with its cow-switcher, and rumbling through the deep heart of the mountains, with its lamps aglow like the eyes of a dog in a night of frost.

The train rolled on in its heavy, slow fashion, and the child slept soundly, for a long while. When he did awake, it was quite dark outside in the land; he could not see, and of course he was in absolute darkness; and for a while he was solely frightened, and trembled terribly, and sobbed in a quiet heart-broken fashion, thinking of them all at home. Poor Dorothea! how anxious she would be! How she would run over the town and walk up to grandfather's at Dorf Ampas, and perhaps even send over to Jenbach, thinking he had taken refuge with Uncle Joachim! His conscience smote him for the sorrow he must be even then causing to his gentle sister; but it never occurred to him to try and go back. If he once were to lose sight of Hirschvogel how could he ever hope to find it again? how could he ever

know whither it had gone—north, south, east or west? The old neighbour had said that the world was small; but August knew at least that it must have a great many places in it; that he had seen himself on the maps on his school-house walls. Almost any other little boy would, I think, have been frightened out of his wits at the position in which he found himself; but August was brave, and he had a firm belief that God and Hirschvogel would take care of him. The master-potter of Nürnberg was always present to his mind, a kindly, benign, and gracious spirit, dwelling manifestly in that porcelain tower whereof he had been the maker.

A droll fancy, you say? But every child with a soul in him has quite as quaint fancies as this one was of August's.

So he got over his terror and his sobbing both, though he was so utterly in the dark. He did not feel cramped at all, because the stove was so large, and air he had in plenty, as it came through the fretwork running round the top. He was hungry again, and again nibbled with prudence at his loaf and his sausage. He could not at all tell the hour. Every time the train stopped and he heard the banging, stamping, shouting, and jangling of chains that went on, his heart seemed to jump up into his mouth. If they should find him out! Sometimes porters came and took away this case and the other, a sack here, a bale there, now a big bag, now a dead chamois. Every time the men trampled near him, and swore at each other, and banged this and that to and fro, he was so frightened that his very breath seemed to stop. When they came to lift the stove out, would they find him? and if they did find him, would they kill him? That was what he kept thinking of all the way, all through the dark hours, which seemed without end. The goods-trains are usually very slow, and are many days doing what

a quick train does in a few hours. This one was quicker than most, because it was bearing goods to the King of Bavaria; still, it took all the short winter's day and the long winter's night and half another day to go over ground that the mail-trains cover in a forenoon. It passed great armoured Kuffstein standing across the beautiful and solemn gorge, denying the right of way to all the foes of Austria. It passed twelve hours later, after lying by in out-of-the-way stations, pretty Rosenheim, that marks the border of Bavaria. And here the Nürnberg stove, with August inside it, was lifted out heedfully and set under a covered way. When it was lifted out, the boy had hard work to keep in his screams; he was tossed to and fro as the men lifted the huge thing, and the earthenware walls of his beloved fire-king were not cushions of down. However, though they swore and grumbled at the weight of it, they never suspected that a living child was inside it, and they carried it out on to the platform and set it down under the roof of the goods-shed. There it passed the rest of the night and all the next morning, and August was all the while within it.

The winds of early winter sweep bitterly over Rosenheim, and all the vast Bavarian plain was one white sheet of snow. If there had not been whole armies of men at work always clearing the iron rails of the snow, no trains could ever have run at all. Happily for August, the thick wrappings in which the stove was enveloped and the stoutness of its own make screened him from the cold, of which, else, he must have died—frozen. He had still some of his loaf, and a little—a very little—of his sausage. What he did begin to suffer from was thirst; and this frightened him almost more than anything else, for Dorothea had read aloud to them one night a story of the tortures some wrecked men had endured because they could not find any water but the salt

sea. It was many hours since he had last taken a drink from the wooden spout of their old pump, which brought them the sparkling, ice-cold water of the hills.

But, fortunately for him, the stove having been marked and registered as "fragile and valuable," was not treated quite like a mere bale of goods, and the Rosenheim station-master, who knew its consignees, resolved to send it on by a passenger-train that would leave there at daybreak. And when this train went out, in it, among piles of luggage belonging to other travellers, to Vienna, Prague, Buda-Pest, Salzburg, was August, still undiscovered, still doubled up like a mole in the winter under the grass. Those words, "fragile and valuable," had made the men lift Hirschvogel gently and with care. He had begun to get used to his prison, and a little used to the incessant pounding and jumbling and rattling and shaking with which modern travel is always accompanied, though modern invention does deem itself so mightily clever. All in the dark he was, and he was terribly thirsty; but he kept feeling the earthenware sides of the Nürnberg giant and saying, softly, "Take care of me; oh, take care of me, dear Hirschvogel!"

He did not say, "Take me back;" for, now that he was fairly out in the world, he wished to see a little of it. He began to think that they must have been all over the world in all this time that the rolling and roaring and hissing and jangling had been about his ears; shut up in the dark, he began to remember all the tales that had been told in Yule round the fire at his grandfather's good house at Dorf, of gnomes and elves and subterranean terrors, and the Erl King riding on the black horse of night, and—and—and he began to sob and to tremble again, and this time did scream outright. But the steam was screaming itself so loudly that no one, had there been anyone nigh, would have heard

him; and in another minute or so the train stopped with a jar and a jerk, and he in his cage could hear men crying aloud, "München! München!"

Then he knew enough of geography to know that he was in the heart of Bavaria. He had had an uncle killed in the Bayerischenwald by the Bavarian forest guards, when in the excitement of hunting a black bear he had overpassed the limits of the Tyrol frontier.

That fate of his kinsman, a gallant young chamois-hunter who had taught him to handle a trigger and load a muzzle, made the very name of Bavaria a terror to August.

"It is Bavaria! It is Bavaria!" he sobbed to the stove; but the stove said nothing to him; it had no fire in it. A stove can no more speak without fire than a man can see without light. Give it fire, and it will sing to you, tell tales to you, offer you in return all the sympathy you ask.

"It is Bavaria!" sobbed August; for it is always a name of dread augury to the Tyroleans, by reason of those bitter struggles and midnight shots and untimely deaths which come from those meetings of jäger and hunter in the Bayerischenwald. But the train stopped; Munich was reached, and August, hot and cold by turns, and shaking like a little aspen-leaf, felt himself once more carried out on the shoulders of men, rolled along on a truck, and finally set down, where he knew not, only he knew he was thirsty—so thirsty! If only he could have reached his hand out and scooped up a little snow!

He thought he had been moved on this truck many miles, but in truth the stove had been only taken from the railway-station to a shop in the Marienplatz. Fortunately, the stove was always set upright on its four gilded feet, an injunction to that effect having been affixed to its written label,

and on its gilded feet it stood now in the small dark curiosity-shop of one Hans Rhilfer.

'I shall not unpack it till Anton comes," he heard a man's voice say; aad then he heard a key grate in a lock, and by the unbroken stillness that ensued he concluded he was alone, and ventured to peep through the straw and hay. What he saw was a small square room filled with pots and pans, pictures, carvings, old blue jugs, old steel armour, shields, daggers, Chinese idols, Vienna china, Turkish rugs, and all the art lumber and fabricated rubbish of a *bric-a-brac* dealer's. It seemed a wonderful place to him; but, oh! was there one drop of water in it all? That was his single thought; for his tongue was parching, and his throat felt on fire, and his chest began to be dry and choked as with dust. There was not a drop of water, but there was a lattice window grated, and beyond the window was a wide stone ledge covered with snow. August cast one look at the locked door, darted out of his hiding place, ran and opened the window, crammed the snow into his mouth again and again, and then flew back into the stove, drew the hay and straw over the place he entered by, tied the cords, and shut the brass door down on himself. He had brought some big icicles in with him, and by them his thirst was finally, if only temporarily, quenched. Then he sat still in the bottom of the stove, listening intently, wide awake, and once more recovering his natural boldness.

The thought of Dorothea kept nipping his heart and his conscience with a hard squeeze now and then; but he thought to himself, "If I can take her back Hirschvogel then how pleased she will be, and how little 'Gilda will clap her hands!" He was not at all selfish in his love for Hirschvogel: he wanted it for them all at home quite as much as for himself. There was at the bottom of his mind a kind of ache of

shame that his father—his own father—should have stripped their hearth and sold their honour thus.

A robin had been perched upon a stone griffin sculptured on a house-eave near. August had felt for the crumbs of his loaf in his pocket, and had thrown them to the little bird sitting so easily on the frozen snow.

In the darkness where he was he now heard a little song, made faint by the stove-wall and the window-glass that was between him and it, but still distinct and exquisitely sweet. It was the robin, singing after feeding on the crumbs. August, as he heard, burst into tears. He thought of Dorothea, who every morning threw out some grain or some bread on the snow before the church. "What use is it going *there*," she said, "if we forget the sweetest creatures God has made?" Poor Dorothea! Poor, good, tender, much-burdened little soul! He thought of her till his tears ran like rain.

Yet it never once occurred to him to dream of going home. Hirschvogel was here.

Presently the key turned in the lock of the door; he heard heavy footsteps and the voice of the man who had said to his father, "You have a little mad dog; muzzle him!" The voice said, "Ay, ay, you have called me a fool many times. Now you shall see what I have gotten for two hundred dirty florins. *Potztausend!* never did *you* do such a stroke of work."

Then the other voice grumbled and swore, and the steps of the two men approached more closely, and the heart of the child went pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, as a mouse's does when it is on the top of a cheese and hears a housemaid's broom sweeping near. They began to strip the stove of its wrappings: that he could tell by the noise they made with the hay and the straw. Soon they had stripped it wholly: that,

too, he knew by the oaths and exclamations of wonder and surprise and rapture which broke from the man who had not seen it before.

"A right royal thing! A wonderful and never-to-be-rivalled thing! Grander than the great stove of Hohen-Salzburg! Sublime! magnificent! matchless!"

So the epithets ran on in thick guttural voices, diffusing a smell of lager-beer so strong as they spoke that it reached August crouching in his stronghold. If they should open the door of the stove! That was his frantic fear. If they should open it, it would be all over with him. They would drag him out; most likely they would kill him, he thought, as his mother's young brother had been killed in the Wald.

The perspiration rolled off his forehead in his agony; but he had control enough over himself to keep quiet, and after standing by the Nürnberg master's work for nigh an hour, praising, marvelling, expatiating in the lengthy German tongue, the men moved to a little distance and began talking of sums of money and divided profits, of which discourse he could make out no meaning. All he could make out was that the name of the king—the king—the king came over very often in their arguments. He fancied at times they quarrelled, for they swore lustily and their voices rose hoarse and high; but after a while they seemed to pacify each other and agree to something, and were in great glee, and so in these merry spirits came and slapped the luminous sides of stately Hirschvogel, and shouted to it:

"Old Mumchance, you have brought us rare good luck! To think you were smoking in a silly fool of a salt-baker's kitchen all these years!"

Then inside the stove August jumped up, with flaming cheeks and clinching hands, and was almost on the point of shouting out to them that they were the thieves and should

say no evil of his father, when he remembered, just in time, that to breathe a word or make a sound was to bring ruin on himself and sever him forever from Hirschvogel. So he kept quite still, and the men barred the shutters of the little lattice and went out by the door, double-locking it after them. He had made out from their talk that they were going to show Hirschvogel to some great person: therefore he kept quite still and dared not move.

Muffled sounds came to him through the shutters from the streets below—the rolling of wheels, the clanging of church-bells, and bursts of that military music which is so seldom silent in the streets of Munich. An hour perhaps passed by; sounds of steps on the stairs kept him in perpetual apprehension. In the intensity of his anxiety, he forgot that he was hungry and many miles away from cheerful, Old World little Hall, lying by the clear gray river-water, with the ramparts of the mountains all round.

Presently the door opened again sharply. He could hear the two dealers' voices murmuring unctuous words, in which "honour," "gratitude," and many fine long noble titles played the chief parts. The voice of another person, more clear and refined than theirs, answered them curtly, and then, close by the Nürnberg stove and the boy's ear, ejaculated a single "*Wunderschön!*" August almost lost his terror for himself in his thrill of pride at his beloved Hirschvogel being thus admired in the great city. He thought the master-potter must be glad too.

"*Wunderschön!*" ejaculated the stranger a second time, and then examined the stove in all its parts, read all its mottoes, gazed long on all its devices.

"It must have been made for the Emperor Maximilian," he said at last; and the poor little boy, meanwhile, within, was "hugged up into nothing," as you children say, dread-

ing that every moment he would open the stove. And open it truly he did, and examined the brass-work of the door; but inside it was so dark that crouching August passed unnoticed, screwed up into a ball like a hedgehog as he was. The gentleman shut to the door at length, without having seen anything strange inside it; and then he talked long and low with the tradesmen, and, as his accent was different from that which August was used to, the child could distinguish little that he said, except the name of the king and the word "gulden" again and again. After a while he went away, one of the dealers accompanying him, one of them lingering behind to bar up the shutters. Then this one also withdrew again, double-locking the door.

The poor little hedgehog uncurled itself and dared to breathe aloud.

What time was it?

Late in the day, he thought, for to accompany the stranger they had lighted a lamp; he had heard the scratch of the match, and through the brass fretwork had seen the lines of light.

He would have to pass the night here, that was certain. He and Hirschvogel were locked in, but at least they were together. If only he could have had something to eat! He thought with a pang of how at this hour at home they ate the sweet soup, sometimes with apples in it from Aunt Maïla's farm orchard, and sang together, and listened to Dorothea's reading of little tales, and basked in the glow and delight that had beamed on them from the great Nürnberg fire-king.

"Oh, poor, poor little 'Gilda! What is she doing without the dear Hirschvogel?" he thought. Poor little 'Gilda! she had only now the black iron stove of the ugly little kitchen. Oh, how cruel of father!

August could not bear to hear the dealers blame or laugh

at his father, but he did feel that it had been so, so cruel to sell Hirschvogel. The mere memory of all those long winter evenings, when they had all closed round it, and roasted chestnuts or crab-apples in it, and listened to the howling of the wind and the deep sound of the church-bells, and tried very much to make each other believe that the wolves still came down from the mountains into the streets of Hall, and were that very minute growling at the house door—all this memory coming on him with the sound of the city bells, and the knowledge that night drew near upon him so completely, being added to his hunger and his fear, so overcame him that he burst out crying for the fiftieth time since he had been inside the stove, and felt that he would starve to death, and wondered dreamily if Hirschvogel would care. Yes, he was sure Hirschvogel would care. Had he not decked it all summer long with alpine roses and edelweiss and heaths and made it sweet with thyme and honeysuckle and great garden-lilies? Had he ever forgotten when Santa Claus came to make it its crown of holly and ivy and wreathe it all around?

"Oh, shelter me; save me; take care of me!" he prayed to the old fire-king, and forgot poor little man, that he had come on this wild-goose chase northward to save and take care of Hirschvogel!

After a time he dropped asleep, as children can do when they weep, and little robust hill-born boys most surely do, be they where they may. It was not very cold in this lumber-room; it was tightly shut up, and very full of things, and at the back of it were the hot pipes of an adjacent house, where a great deal of fuel was burnt. Moreover, August's clothes were warm ones, and his blood was young. So he was not cold, though Munich is terribly cold in the nights of December; and he slept on and on—which was a comfort to him, for he forgot his woes, and his perils, and his hunger for a time

Midnight was once more chiming from all the brazen tongues of the city when he awoke, and, all being still around him, ventured to put his head out of the brass door of the stove to see why such a strange bright light was round him.

It was a very strange and brilliant light indeed; and yet, what is perhaps still stranger, it did not frighten or amaze him, nor did what he saw alarm him either, and yet I think it would have done you or me. For what he saw was nothing less than all the *bric-à-brac* in motion.

A big jug, an Apostel-Krug, of Kruessen, was solemnly dancing a minuet with a plump Faenza jar; a tall Dutch clock was going through a gavotte with a spindle-legged ancient chair; a very droll porcelain figure of Zitzenhausen was bowing to a very stiff soldier in *terre cuite* of Ulm; an old violin of Cremona was playing itself, and a queer little shrill plaintive music that thought itself merry came from a painted spinet covered with faded roses; some gilt Spanish leather had got up on the wall and laughed; a Dresden mirror was tripping about, crowned with flowers, and a Japanese bonze was riding along on a griffin; a slim Venetian rapier had come to blows with a stout Ferrara sabre, all about a little pale-faced chit of a damsel in white Nymphenburg china; and a portly Franconian pitcher in *grès gris* was calling aloud, "Oh, these Italians! always at feud!" But nobody listened to him at all. A great number of little Dresden cups and saucers were all skipping and waltzing; the teapots, with their broad round faces, were spinning their own lids like teetotums; the high-backed gilded chairs were having a game of cards together; and a little Saxe poodle, with a blue ribbon at its throat, was running from one to another, whilst a yellow cat of Cornelis Zachtleven's rode about on a Delft horse in blue pottery of 1489. Mean-

while the brilliant light shed on the scene came from three silver candelabra, though they had no candles set up in them; and, what is the greatest miracle of all, August looked on at these mad freaks and felt no sensation of wonder! He only, as he heard the violin and the spinet playing, felt an irresistible desire to dance too.

No doubt his face said what he wished; for a lovely little lady, all in pink and gold and white, with powdered hair, and high-heeled shoes, and all made of the very finest and fairest Meissen china, tripped up to him, and smiled, and gave him her hand, and led him out to a minuet. And he danced it perfectly—poor little August in his thick, clumsy shoes, and his thick, clumsy sheepskin jacket, and his rough homespun linen, and his broad Tyrolean hat! He must have danced it perfectly, this dance of kings and queens in days when crowns were duly honoured, for the lovely lady always smiled benignly and never scolded him at all, and danced so divinely herself to the stately measures the spinet was playing that August could not take his eyes off her till, the minuet ended, she sat down on her own white-and-gold bracket.

"I am the Princess of Saxe-Royal," she said to him, with a benignant smile; "and you have got through that minuet very fairly."

Then he ventured to say to her:

"Madame my princess, could you tell me kindly why some of the figures and furniture dance and speak, and some lie up in a corner like lumber? It does make me curious. Is it rude to ask?"

For it greatly puzzled him why, when some of the *bric-à-brac* was all full of life and motion, some was quite still and had not a single thrill in it.

"My dear child," said the powdered lady, "is it possible

that you do not know the reason? Why, those silent, dull things are *imitation.*"

This she said with so much decision that she evidently considered it a condensed but complete answer.

"Imitation?" repeated August, timidly, not understanding.

"Of course! Lies, falsehoods, fabrications!" said the princess in pink shoes, very vivaciously. "They only *pretend* to be what we are! They never wake up: how can they? No imitation ever had any soul in it yet."

"Oh!" said August, humbly, not even sure that he understood entirely yet. He looked at Hirschvogel: surely it had a royal soul within it: would it not wake up and speak? Oh dear! how he longed to hear the voice of his fire-king! And he began to forget that he stood by a lady who sat upon a pedestal of gold-and-white china, with the year 1746 cut on it, and the Meissen mark.

"What will you be when you are a man?" said the little lady, sharply, for her black eyes were quick though her red lips were smiling. "Will you work for the *Konigliche Porcellan-Manufactur*, like my great dead Kandler?"

"I have never thought," said August, stammering; "at least—that is—I do wish—I do hope to be a painter, as was Master Augustin Hirschvogel at Nürnberg."

"Bravo!" said all the real *bric-à-brac* in one breath, and the two Italian rapiers left off fighting to cry, "*Benone!*" For there is not a bit of true *bric-à-brac* in all Europe that does not know the names of the mighty masters.

August felt quite pleased to have won so much applause, and grew as red as the lady's shoes with bashful contentment.

"I knew all the Hirschvogel, from old Veit downwards," said a fat *grès de Flandre* beer-jug: "I myself was made at Nürnberg." And he bowed to the great stove very politely,

taking off his own silver hat—I mean lid—with a courtly sweep that he could scarcely have learned from burgomasters. The stove, however, was silent, and a sickening suspicion (for what is such heart-break as a suspicion of what we love?) came through the mind of August: *Was Hirschvogel only imitation?*

"No, no, no, no!" he said to himself, stoutly: though Hirschvogel never stirred, never spoke, yet would he keep all faith in it! After all their happy years together, after all the nights of warmth and joy he owed it, should he doubt his own friend and hero, whose gilt lion's feet he had kissed in his babyhood? "No, no, no, no!" he said, again, with so much emphasis that the Lady of Meissen looked sharply again at him.

"No," she said, with pretty disdain; "no, believe me, they may 'pretend' forever. They can never look like us! They imitate even our marks, but never can they look like the real thing, never can they *chassent de race.*"

"How should they?" said a bronze statuette of Vischer's. "They daub themselves green with verdigris, or sit out in the rain to get rusted; but green and rust are not *patina;* only the ages can give that!"

"And *my* imitations are all in primary colours, staring colours, hot as the colours of a hostelry's sign-board!" said the Lady of Meissen, with a shiver.

"Well, there is a *grès de Flandre* over there, who pretends to be a Hans Kraut, as I am," said the jug with the silver hat, pointing with his handle to a jug that lay prone on its side in a corner. "He has copied me as exactly as it is given to moderns to copy us. Almost he might be mistaken for me. But yet what a difference there is! How crude are his blues! how evidently done over the glaze are his black letters! He has tried to give himself my very twist; but what

a lamentable exaggeration of that playful deviation in my lines which in his becomes actual deformity!"

"And look at that," said the gilt Cordovan leather, with a contemptuous glance at a broad piece of gilded leather spread out on a table. "They will sell him cheek by jowl with me, and give him my name; but look! *I* am overlaid with pure gold beaten thin as a film and laid on me in absolute honesty by worthy Diego de las Gorgias, worker in leather of lovely Cordova in the blessed reign of Ferdinand the Most Christian. *His* gilding is one part gold to eleven other parts of brass and rubbish, and it has been laid on him with a brush— *a brush* —pah! of course he will be as black as a crock in a few years' time, whilst I am as bright as when I first was made, and, unless I am burnt as my Cordova burnt its heretics, I shall shine on forever."

"They carve pear-wood because it is so soft, and dye it brown, and call it *me* " said an old oak cabinet, with a chuckle.

"That is not so painful; it does not vulgarise you so much as the cups they paint to-day and christen after *me*," said a Carl Theodor cup subdued in hue, yet gorgeous as a jewel.

"Nothing can be so annoying as to see common gimcracks aping *me*," interposed the princess in the pink shoes.

"They even steal my motto, though it is Scripture," said a *Trauerkrug* of Regensburg in black-and-white.

"And my own dots they put on plain English china creatures!" sighed the little white maid of Nymphenburg.

"And they sell hundreds and thousands of common china plates, calling them after me, and baking my saints and my legends in a muffle of to-day; it is blasphemy!" said a stout plate of Gubbio, which in its year of birth had seen the face of Maestro Giorgio.

"That is what is so terrible in these *bric-à-brac* places,"

said the princess of Meissen. "It brings one in contact with such low, imitative creatures; one really is safe nowhere nowadays unless under glass at the Louvre or South Kensington."

"And they get even there," sighed the *grès de Flandre*. "A terrible thing happened to a dear friend of mine, a *terre cuite* of Blasius (you know the *terres cuites* of Blasius date from 1560). Well, he was put under glass in a museum that shall be nameless, and he found himself set next to his own imitation born and baked yesterday at Frankfort, and what think you the miserable creature said to him, with a grin? 'Old Pipeclay,' that is what he called my friend, 'the fellow that bought *me* got just as much commission on me as the fellow that bought *you*, and that was all that *he* thought about. You know it is only the public money that goes!' And the horrid creature grinned again till he actually cracked himself. There is a Providence above all things, even museums."

"Providence might have interfered before, and saved the public money," said the little Meissen lady with the pink shoes.

"After all, does it matter?" said a Dutch jar of Haarlem. "All the shamming in the world will not *make* them us!"

"One does not like to be vulgarised," said the Lady of Meissen, angrily.

"My maker, the Krabbetje,* did not trouble his head about that," said the Haarlem jar, proudly. "The Krabbetje made me for the kitchen, the bright, clean, snow-white Dutch kitchen, well-nigh three centuries ago, and now I am thought worthy the palace; yet I wish I were at home; yes, I wish I could see the good Dutch vrouw, and the

* Jan Asselyn, called Krabbetje, the Little Crab, born 1610, master-potter of Delft and Haarlem.

shining canals, and the great green meadows dotted with the kine."

"Ah! if we could all go back to our makers!" sighed the Gubbio plate, thinking of Giorgio Andreoli and the glad and gracious days of the Renaissance: and somehow the words touched the frolicsome souls of the dancing jars, the spinning teapots, the chairs that were playing cards; and the violin stopped its merry music with a sob, and the spinet sighed—thinking of dead hands.

Even the little Saxe poodle howled for a master forever lost; and only the swords went on quarrelling, and made such a clattering noise that the Japanese bonze rode at them on his monster and knocked them both right over, and they lay straight and still, looking foolish, and the little Nymphenburg maid, though she was crying, smiled and almost laughed.

Then from where the great stove stood there came a solemn voice.

All eyes turned upon Hirschvogel, and the heart of its little human comrade gave a great jump of joy.

"My friends," said that clear voice from the turret of Nürnberg faïence, "I have listened to all you have said. There is too much talking among the Mortalities whom one of themselves has called the Windbags. Let not us be like them. I hear among men so much vain speech, so much precious breath and precious time wasted in empty boasts, foolish anger, useless reiteration, blatant argument, ignoble mouthings, that I have learned to deem speech a curse, laid on man to weaken and envenom all his undertakings. For over two hundred years I have never spoken myself: you, I hear, are not so reticent. I only speak now because one of you said a beautiful thing that touched me. If we all might but go back to our makers! Ah, yes! if we might!

We were made in days when even men were true creatures, and so we, the work of their hands, were true too. We, the begotten of ancient days, derive all the value in us from the fact that our makers wrought at us with zeal, with piety, with integrity, with faith—not to win fortunes or to glut a market, but to do nobly an honest thing and create for the honour of the Arts and God. I see amidst you a little human thing who loves me, and in his own ignorant childish way loves Art. Now, I want him forever to remember this night and these words; to remember that we are what we are, and precious in the eyes of the world, because centuries ago those who were of single mind and of pure hand so created us, scorning sham and haste and counterfeit. Well do I recollect my master, Augustin Hirschvogel. He led a wise and blameless life, and wrought in loyalty and love, and made his time beautiful thereby, like one of his own rich, many-coloured church casements, that told holy tales as the sun streamed through them. Ah, yes, my friends, to go back to our masters!—that would be the best that could befall us. But they are gone, and even the perishable labours of their lives outlive them. For many, many years I, once honoured of emperors, dwelt in a humble house and warmed in successive winters three generations of little, cold, hungry children. When I warmed them they forgot that they were hungry; they laughed and told tales, and slept at last about my feet. Then I knew that humble as had become my lot it was one that my master would have wished for me, and I was content. Sometimes a tired woman would creep up to me, and smile because she was near me, and point out my golden crown or my ruddy fruit to a baby in her arms. That was better than to stand in a great hall of a great city, cold and empty, even though wise men came to gaze and throngs of fools gaped, passing with

flattering words. Where I go now I know not; but since I go from that humble house where they loved me, I shall be sad and alone. They pass so soon—those fleeting mortal lives! Only we endure—we the things that the human brain creates. We can but bless them a little as they glide by: if we have done that, we have done what our masters wished. So in us our masters, being dead, yet may speak and live."

Then the voice sank away in silence, and a strange golden light that had shone on the great stove faded away; so also the light died down in the silver candelabra. A soft, pathetic melody stole gently through the room. It came from the old, old spinet that was covered with the faded roses.

Then that sad, sighing music of a bygone day died too; the clocks of the city struck six of the morning; day was rising over the Bayerischenwald. August awoke with a great start, and found himself lying on the bare bricks of the floor of the chamber; and all the *bric-à-brac* was lying quite still all around. The pretty Lady of Meissen was motionless on her porcelain bracket, and the little Saxe poodle was quiet at her side.

He rose slowly to his feet. He was very cold, but he was not sensible of it or of the hunger that was gnawing his little empty entrails. He was absorbed in the wondrous sight, in the wondrous sounds, that he had seen and heard.

All was dark around him. Was it still midnight or had morning come? Morning, surely; for against the barred shutters he heard the tiny song of the robin.

Tramp, tramp, too, came a heavy step up the stair. He had but a moment in which to scramble back into the interior of the great stove, when the door opened and the two dealers entered, bringing burning candles with them to see their way.

August was scarcely conscious of danger more than he was of cold or hunger. A marvellous sense of courage, of security, of happiness, was about him, like strong and gentle arms enfolding him and lifting him upward—upward—upward! Hirschvogel would defend him.

The dealers undid the shutters, scaring the red-breast away; and then tramped about in their heavy boots and chatted in contented voices, and began to wrap up the stove once more in all its straw and hay and cordage.

It never once occurred to them to glance inside. Why should they look inside a stove that they had bought and were about to sell again for all its glorious beauty of exterior.

The child still did not feel afraid. A great exaltation had come to him: he was like one lifted up by his angels.

Presently the two traders called up their porters, and the stove, heedfully swathed and wrapped and tended as though it were some sick prince going on a journey, was borne on the shoulders of six stout Bavarians down the stairs and out of the door into the Marienplatz. Even behind all those wrappings August felt the icy bite of the intense cold of the outer air at dawn of a winter's day in Munich. The men moved the stove with exceeding gentleness and care, so that he had often been far more roughly shaken in his big brothers' arms than he was in his journey now; and though both hunger and thirst made themselves felt, being foes that will take no denial, he was still in that state of nervous exaltation which deadens all physical suffering and is at once a cordial and an opiate. He had heard Hirschvogel speak; that was enough.

The stout carriers tramped through the city, six of them, with the Nürnberg fire-castle on their brawny shoulders, and went right across Munich to the railway-station, and August in the dark recognised all the ugly, jangling, pounding,

roaring, hissing railway-noises, and thought, despite his courage and excitement, "Will it be a *very* long journey?" For his stomach had at times an odd sinking sensation, and his head often felt sadly light and swimming. If it was a very, very long journey he felt half afraid that he would be dead or something bad before the end, and Hirschvogel would be so lonely: that was what he thought most about; not much about himself, and not much about Dorothea and the house at home. He was "high strung to high emprise," and could not look behind him.

Whether for a long or a short journey, whether for weal or woe, the stove with August still within it was once more hoisted up into a great van; but this time it was not all alone, and the two dealers as well as the six porters were all with it.

He in his darkness knew that; for he heard their voices. The train glided away over the Bavarian plain southward; and he heard the men say something of Berg and the Wurm-See, but their German was strange to him, and he could not make out what these names meant.

The train rolled on, with all its fume and fuss, and roar of steam, and stench of oil and burning coal. It had to go quietly and slowly on account of the snow which was falling, and which had fallen all night.

"He might have waited till he came to the city," grumbled one man to another. "What weather to stay on at Berg!"

But who he was that stayed on at Berg, August could not make out at all.

Though the men grumbled about the state of the roads and the season, they were hilarious and well content, for they laughed often, and, when they swore, did so good-humouredly, and promised their porters fine presents at New Year; and August, like a shrewd little boy as he was,

who even in the secluded Innthal had learned that money is the chief mover of men's mirth, thought to himself, with a terrible pang:

"They have sold Hirschvogel for some great sum! They have sold him already!"

Then his heart grew faint and sick within him, for he knew very well that he must soon die, shut up without food and water thus; and what new owner of the great fireplace would ever permit him to dwell in it?

"Never mind; I *will* die," thought he; "and Hirschvogel will know it."

Perhaps you think him a very foolish little fellow; but I do not.

It is always good to be loyal and ready to endure to the end.

It is but an hour and a quarter that the train usually takes to pass from Munich to the Wurm-See or Lake of Starnberg; but this morning the journey was much slower, because the way was encumbered by snow. When it did reach Possenhofen and stop, and the Nürnberg stove was lifted out once more, August could see through the fretwork of the brass door, as the stove stood upright facing the lake, that this Wurm-See was a calm and noble piece of water, of great width, with low wooded banks and distant mountains, a peaceful, serene place, full of rest.

It was now near ten o'clock. The sun had come forth; there was a clear gray sky hereabouts; the snow was not falling, though it lay white and smooth everywhere, down to the edge of the water, which before long would itself be ice.

Before he had time to get more than a glimpse of the green gliding surface, the stove was again lifted up and placed on a large boat that was in waiting—one of those very long and huge boats which the women in these parts use as

laundries, and the men as timber-rafts. The stove, with much labour and much expenditure of time and care, was hoisted into this, and August would have grown sick and giddy with the heaving and falling if his big brothers had not long used him to such tossing about, so that he was as much at ease head, as feet, downward. The stove, once in it safely with its guardians, the big boat moved across the lake to Leoni. How a little hamlet on a Bavarian lake got that Tuscan-sounding name I cannot tell; but Leoni it is. The big boat was a long time crossing; the lake here is about three miles broad, and these heavy barges are unwieldy and heavy to move, even though they are towed and tugged at from the shore.

"If we should be too late!" the two dealers muttered to each other, in agitation and alarm. "He said eleven o'clock."

"Who was he?" thought August; "the buyer, of course, of Hirschvogel." The slow passage across the Wurm-See was accomplished at length: the lake was placid; there was a sweet calm in the air and on the water; there was a great deal of snow in the sky, though the sun was shining and gave a solemn hush to the atmosphere. Boats and one little steamer were going up and down; in the clear frosty light the distant mountains of Zillerthal and the Algau Alps were visible; market-people, cloaked and furred, went by on the water or on the banks; the deep woods of the shores were black and gray and brown. Poor August could see nothing of a scene that would have delighted him; as the stove was now set, he could only see the old worm-eaten wood of the huge barge.

Presently they touched the pier at Leoni.

"Now, men, for a stout mile and half! You shall drink your reward at Christmas time," said one of the dealers to

his porters, who, stout, strong men as they were, showed a disposition to grumble at their task. Encouraged by large promises, they shouldered sullenly the Nürnberg stove, grumbling again at its preposterous weight, but little dreaming that they carried within it a small, panting, trembling boy; for August began to tremble now that he was about to see the future owner of Hirschvogel.

"If he looks a good, kind man," he thought, "I will beg him to let me stay with it."

The porters began their toilsome journey, and moved off from the village pier. He could see nothing, for the brass door was over his head, and all that gleamed through it was the clear gray sky. He had been tilted on to his back, and if he had not been a little mountaineer, used to hanging head-downward over crevasses, and, moreover, seasoned to rough treatment by the hunters and guides of the hills and the salt-workers in the town, he would have been made ill and sick by the bruising and shaking and many changes of position to which he had been subjected.

The way the men took was a mile and a half in length, but the road was heavy with snow, and the burden they bore was heavier still. The dealers cheered them on, swore at them and praised them in one breath; besought them and reiterated their splendid promises, for a clock was striking eleven, and they had been ordered to reach their destination at that hour, and, though the air was so cold, the heat-drops rolled off their foreheads as they walked, they were so frightened at being late. But the porters would not budge a foot quicker than they chose, and as they were not poor four-footed carriers their employers dared not thrash them, though most willingly would they have done so.

The road seemed terribly long to the anxious tradesmen, to the plodding porters, to the poor little man inside the stove,

as he kept sinking and rising, sinking and rising, with each of their steps.

Where they were going he had no idea, only after a very long time he lost the sense of the fresh icy wind blowing on his face through the brass-work above, and felt by their movements beneath him that they were mounting steps or stairs. Then he heard a great many different voices, but he could not understand what was being said. He felt that his bearers paused some time, then moved on and on again. Their feet went so softly he thought they must be moving on carpet, and as he felt a warm air come to him he concluded that he was in some heated chambers, for he was a clever little fellow, and could put two and two together, though he was so hungry and so thirsty and his empty stomach felt so strangely. They must have gone, he thought, through some very great number of rooms, for they walked so long on and on, on and on. At last the stove was set down again, and, happily for him, set so that his feet were downward.

What he fancied was that he was in some museum, like that which he had seen in the city of Innspruck.

The voices he heard were very hushed, and the steps seemed to go away, far away, leaving him alone with Hirschvogel. He dared not look out, but he peeped through the brass-work, and all he could see was a big carved lion's head in ivory, with a gold crown atop. It belonged to a velvet fauteuil, but he could not see the chair, only the ivory lion.

There was a delicious fragrance in the air—a fragrance as flowers. "Only how can it be flowers?" thought August. "It is November!"

From afar off, as it seemed, there came a dreamy, exquisite music, as sweet as the spinet's had been, but so

much fuller, so much richer, seeming as though a chorus of angels were singing all together. August ceased to think of the museum; he thought of heaven. "Are we gone to the Master?" he thought, remembering the words of Hirschvogel.

All was so still around him; there was no sound anywhere except the sound of the far-off choral music.

He did not know it, but he was in the royal castle of Berg, and the music he heard was the music of Wagner, who was playing in a distant room some of the motives of "Parsival."

Presently he heard a fresh step near him, and he heard a low voice say, close behind him, "So!" An exclamation no doubt, he thought, of admiration and wonder at the beauty of Hirschvogel.

Then the same voice said, after a long pause, during which no doubt, as August thought, this newcomer was examining all the details of the wondrous fire-tower, "It was well bought; it is exceedingly beautiful! It is most undoubtedly the work of Augustin Hirschvogel."

Then the hand of the speaker turned the round handle of the brass door, and the fainting soul of the poor little prisoner within grew sick with fear.

The handle turned, the door was slowly drawn open, someone bent down and looked in, and the same voice that he had heard in praise of its beauty called aloud, in surprise, "What is this in it? A live child!"

Then August, terrified beyond all self control, and dominated by one master-passion, sprang out of the body of the stove and fell at the feet of the speaker.

"Oh, let me stay! Pray, meinherr, let me stay!" he sobbed. "I have come all the way with Hirschvogel!"

Some gentlemen's hands seized him, not gently by any

means, and their lips angrily muttered in his ear, "Little knave, peace! be quiet! hold your tongue! It is the king!"

They were about to drag him out of the august atmosphere as if he had been some venomous, dangerous beast come there to slay, but the voice he had heard speak of the stove said, in kind accents, "Poor little child! he is very young. Let him go: let him speak to me."

The word of a king is law to his courtiers: so, sorely against their wish, the angry and astonished chamberlains let August slide out of their grasp, and he stood there in his little rough sheepskin coat and his thick, mud-covered boots, with his curling hair all in a tangle, in the midst of the most beautiful chamber he had ever dreamed of, and in the presence of a young man with a beautiful dark face, and eyes full of dreams and fire; and the young man said to him:

"My child, how came you here, hidden in this stove? Be not afraid: tell me the truth. I am the king."

August in an instinct of homage cast his great battered black hat with the tarnished gold tassels down on the floor of the room. and folded his little brown hands in supplication. He was too intensely in earnest to be in any way abashed; he was too lifted out of himself by his love for Hirschvogel to be conscious of any awe before any earthly majesty. He was only so glad—so glad it was the king. Kings were always kind; so the Tyrolese think, who love their lords.

"Oh, dear king!" he said, with trembling entreaty in his faint little voice, "Hirschvogel was ours, and we have loved it all our lives; and father sold it. And when I saw that it did really go from us, then I said to myself I would go with it; and I have come all the way inside it. And last night it spoke and said beautiful things. And I do pray you to let me live with it, and I will go out every morning and cut

wood for it and you, if only you will let me stay beside it. No one ever has fed it with fuel but me since I grew big enough, and it loves me; it does indeed; it said so last night; and it said that it had been happier with us than if it were in any palace——"

And then his breath failed him, and, as he lifted his little eager, pale face to the young king's, great tears were falling down his cheeks.

Now, the king liked all poetic and uncommon things, and there was that in the child's face which pleased and touched him. He motioned to his gentlemen to leave the little boy alone.

"What is your name?" he asked him.

"I am August Strehla. My father is Hans Strehla. We live in Hall, in the Innthal; and Hirschvogel has been ours so long—so long!"

His lips quivered with a broken sob.

"And have you truly travelled inside this stove all the way from Tyrol?"

"Yes," said August; "no one thought to look inside till you did."

The king laughed; then another view of the matter occurred to him.

"Who bought the stove of your father?" he inquired.

"Traders of Munich," said August, who did not know that he ought not to have spoken to the king as to a simple citizen, and whose little brain was whirling and spinning dizzily round its one central idea.

"What sum did they pay your father, do you know?" asked the sovereign.

"Two hundred florins," said August, with a great sigh of shame. "It was so much money, and he is so poor, and there are so many of us."

The king turned to his gentlemen-in-waiting. "Did these dealers of Munich come with the stove?"

He was answered in the affirmative. He desired them to be sought for and brought before him. As one of his chamberlains hastened on the errand, the monarch looked at August with compassion.

"You are very pale, little fellow: when did you eat last?"

"I had some bread and sausage with me; yesterday afternoon I finished it."

"You would like to eat now?"

"If I might have a little water I would be glad; my throat is very dry."

The king had water and wine brought for him, and cake also; but August, though he drank eagerly, could not swallow anything. His mind was in too great a tumult.

"May I stay with Hirschvogel?—may I stay?" he said with feverish agitation.

"Wait a little," said the king, and asked, abruptly, "What do you wish to be when you are a man?"

"A painter. I wish to be what Hirschvogel was—I mean the master that made *my* Hirschvogel."

"I understand," said the king.

Then the two dealers were brought into their sovereign's presence. They were so terribly alarmed, not being either so innocent or so ignorant as August was that they were trembling as though they were being led to the slaughter, and they were so utterly astonished too at a child having come all the way from Tyrol in the stove, as a gentleman of the court had just told them this child had done, that they could not tell what to say or where to look, and presented a very foolish aspect indeed.

"Did you buy this Nürnberg stove of this little boy's father for two hundred florins?" the king asked them; and

his voice was no longer soft and kind as it had been when addressing the child, but very stern.

"Yes, your majesty," murmured the trembling traders.

"And how much did the gentleman who purchased it for me give to you?"

"Two thousand ducats, your majesty," muttered the dealers, frightened out of their wits, and telling the truth in their fright.

The gentleman was not present: he was a trusted counsellor in art matters of the king's, and often made purchases for him.

The king smiled a little, and said nothing. The gentleman had made out the price to him as eleven thousand ducats.

"You will give at once to this boy's father the two thousand gold ducats that you received, less the two hundred Austrian florins that you paid him," said the king to his humiliated and abject subjects. "You are great rogues. Be thankful you are not more greatly punished."

He dismissed them by a sign to his courtiers, and to one of these gave the mission of making the dealers of the Marienplatz disgorge their ill-gotten gains.

August heard, and felt dazzled yet miserable. Two thousand gold Bavarian ducats for his father! Why, his father would never need to go any more to the salt-baking! And yet, whether for ducats or for florins, Hirschvogel was sold just the same, and would the king let him stay with it?—would he?

"Oh, do! oh, please do!" he murmured, joining his little brown weather-stained hands, and kneeling down before the young monarch, who himself stood absorbed in painful thought, for the deception so basely practised for the greedy sake of gain on him by a trusted counsellor was bitter to him.

He looked down on the child, and as he did so smiled once more.

"Rise up, my little man," he said, in a kind voice; "kneel only to your God. Will I let you stay with your Hirschvogel? Yes, I will, you shall stay at my court, and you shall be taught to be a painter—in oils or on porcelain as you will—and you must grow up worthily, and win all the laurels at our Schools of Art, and if when you are twenty-one years old you have done well and bravely, then I will give you your Nürnberg stove, or, if I am no more living, then those who reign after me shall do so. And now go away with this gentleman, and be not afraid, and you shall light a fire every morning in Hirschvogel, but you will not need to go out and cut the wood."

Then he smiled and stretched out his hand; the courtiers tried to make August understand that he ought to bow and touch it with his lips, but August could not understand that anyhow; he was too happy. He threw his two arms about the king's knees, and kissed his feet passionately; then he lost all sense of where he was, and fainted away from hunger, and tire, and emotion, and wondrous joy.

As the darkness of his swoon closed in on him, he heard in his fancy the voice from Hirschvogel saying:

"Let us be worthy our maker!"

He is only a scholar yet, but he is a happy scholar, and promises to be a great man. Sometimes he goes back for a few days to Hall, where the gold ducats have made his father prosperous. In the old house-room there is a large white porcelain stove of Munich, the king's gift to Dorothea and 'Gilda.

And August never goes home without going into the great church and saying his thanks to God, who blessed his strange winter's journey in the Nürnberg stove. As for

his dream in the dealers' room that night, he will never admit that he did dream it; he still declares that he saw it all and heard the voice of Hirschvogel. And who shall say that he did not? for what is the gift of the poet and the artist except to see the sights which others cannot see and to hear the sounds that others cannot hear?

X

RAB AND HIS FRIENDS

FOUR-AND-THIRTY years ago, Bob Ainslie and I were coming up Infirmary Street from the Edinburgh High School, our heads together, and our arms intertwisted, as only lovers and boys know how, or why.

When we got to the top of the street, and turned north, we espied a crowd at the Tron Church. "A dog-fight!" shouted Bob, and was off; and so was I, both of us all but praying that it might not be over before we got up! And is not this boy-nature? and human nature too? and don't we all wish a house on fire not to be out before we see it? Dogs like fighting; old Isaac says they "delight" in it, and for the best of all reasons; and boys are not cruel because they like to see the fight. They see three of the great cardinal virtues of dog or man—courage, endurance, and skill—in intense action. This is very different from a love of making dogs fight, and enjoying, and aggravating, and making gain by their pluck. A boy—be he ever so fond himself of fighting, if he be a good boy, hates and despises all this, but he would run off with Bob and me fast enough: it is a natural, and not wicked interest, that all boys and men have in witnessing intense energy in action.

Does any curious and finely-ignorant woman wish to know how Bob's eye at a glance announced a dog-fight to his brain? He did not, he could not see the dogs fighting; it was a flash of an inference, a rapid induction. The crowd round a couple of dogs fighting, is a crowd masculine

mainly, with an occasional active, compassionate woman, fluttering wildly round the outside, and using her tongue and her hands freely upon the men, as so many "brutes;" it is a crowd annular, compact, and mobile; a crowd centripetal, having its eyes and its heads all bent downwards and inwards, to one common focus.

Well, Bob and I are up, and find it is not over: a small thoroughbred, white bull-terrier, is busy throttling a large shepherd's dog, unaccustomed to war, but not to be trifled with. They are hard at it; the scientific little fellow doing his work in great style, his pastoral enemy fighting wildly, but with the sharpest of teeth and a great courage. Science and breeding, however, soon had their own; the Game Chicken, as the premature Bob called him, working his way up, took his final grip of poor Yarrow's throat—and he lay gasping and done for. His master, a brown, handsome, big young shepherd from Tweedsmuir, would have liked to have knocked down any man, would "drink up Esil, or eat a crocodile," for that part, if he had a chance: it was no use kicking the little dog; that would only make him hold the closer. Many were the means shouted out in mouthfuls, of the best possible ways of ending it. "Water!" but there was none near, and many cried for it who might have got it from the well at Blackfriars Wynd. "Bite the tail!" and a large, vague, benevolent, middle-aged man, more desirous than wise, with some struggle got the bushy end of *Yarrow's* tail into his ample mouth, and bit it with all his might. This was more than enough for the much-enduring, much-perspiring shepherd, who, with a gleam of joy over his broad visage, delivered a terrific facer upon our large, vague, benevolent, middle-aged friend—who went down like a shot.

Still the Chicken holds; death not far off. "Snuff! a

pinch of snuff!" observed a calm, highly-dressed young buck, with an eye-glass in his eye. "Snuff, indeed!" growled the angry crowd, affronted and glaring. "Snuff! a pinch of snuff!" again observes the buck but with more urgency; whereon were produced several open boxes, and from a mull which may have been at Culloden, he took a pinch, knelt down, and presented it to the nose of the Chicken. The laws of physiology and of snuff take their course; the Chicken sneezes, and Yarrow is free!

The young pastoral giant stalks off with Yarrow in his arms—comforting him.

But the Bull Terrier's blood is up, and his soul unsatisfied; he grips the first dog he meets, and discovering she is not a dog, in Homeric phrase, he makes a brief sort of *amende*, and is off. The boys, with Bob and me at their head, are after him: down Niddry Street he goes, bent on mischief; up the Cowgate like an arrow—Bob and I, and our small men, panting behind.

There, under the single arch of the South Bridge, is a huge mastiff, sauntering down the middle of the causeway, as if with his hands in his pockets: he is old, gray, brindled, as big as a little Highland bull, and has the Shakespearian dewlaps shaking as he goes.

The Chicken makes straight at him, and fastens on his throat. To our astonishment, the great creature does nothing but stand still, hold himself up, and roar—yes, roar; a long, serious, remonstrative roar. How is this? Bob and I are up to them. *He is muzzled!* The bailies had proclaimed a general muzzling, and his master, studying strength and economy mainly, had encompassed his huge jaws in a home-made apparatus, constructed out of the leather of some ancient *breechin*. His mouth was open as far as it could; his lips curled up in rage—a sort of terrible

grin; his teeth gleaming, ready, from out the darkness; the strap across his mouth tense as a bowstring; his whole frame stiff with indignation and surprise; his roar asking us all round, "Did you ever see the like of this?" He looked a statue of anger and astonishment, done in Aberdeen granite.

We soon had a crowd: the Chicken held on. "A knife!" cried Bob; and a cobbler gave him his knife: you know the kind of knife, worn away obliquely to a point, and always keen. I put its edge to the tense leather; it ran before it; and then!—one sudden jerk of that enormous head, a sort of dirty mist about his mouth, no noise—and the bright and fierce little fellow is dropped, limp, and dead. A solemn pause: this was more than any of us had bargained for. I turned the little fellow over, and saw he was quite dead; the mastiff had taken him by the small of the back like a rat, and broken it.

He looked down at his victim appeased, ashamed, and amazed; snuffed him all over, stared at him, and taking a sudden thought, turned round and trotted off. Bob took the dead dog up, and said, "John, we'll bury him after tea." "Yes," said I, and was off after the mastiff. He made up the Cowgate at a rapid swing; he had forgotten some engagement. He turned up the Candlemaker Row, and stopped at the Harrow Inn.

There was a carrier's cart ready to start, and a keen thin, impatient, black-a-vised little man, his hand at his gray horse's head, looking about angrily for something. "Rab, ye thief!" said he, aiming a kick at my great friend, who drew cringing up, and avoiding the heavy shoe with more agility than dignity, and watching his master's eye, slunk dismayed under the cart—his ears down, and as much as he had of tail down too.

What a man this must be—thought I—to whom my tremendous hero turns tail! The carrier saw the muzzle hanging, cut and useless, from his neck, and I eagerly told him the story, which Bob and I always thought, and still think, Homer, or King David, or Sir Walter alone were worthy to rehearse. The severe little man was mitigated, and condescended to say, "Rab, my man, puir Rabbie,"—whereupon the stump of a tail rose up, the ears were cocked, the eyes filled, and were comforted; the two friends were reconciled. "Hupp!" and a stroke of the whip were given to Jess; and off went the three.

Bob and I buried the Game Chicken that night (we had not much of a tea) in the back-green of his house in Melville Street, No. 17, with considerable gravity and silence; and being at the time in the Iliad, and, like all boys, Trojans, we called him Hector of course.

Six years have passed—a long time for a boy and a dog: Bob Ainslie is off to the wars; I am a medical student and clerk at Minto House Hospital.

Rab I saw almost every week, on the Wednesday and we had much pleasant intimacy. I found the way to his heart by frequent scratching of his huge head, and an occasional bone. When I did not notice him he would plant himself straight before me, and stand wagging that butt of a tail, and looking up, with his head a little to one side. His master I occasionally saw; he used to call me "Maister John," but was laconic as any Spartan.

One fine October afternoon, I was leaving the hospital, when I saw the large gate open, and in walked Rab, with that great and easy saunter of his. He looked as if taking general possession of the place; like the Duke of Wellington entering a subdued city, satiated with victory and peace. After him came Jess, now white from age, with her cart; and in it a woman, carefully wrapped up—the carrier leading the horse anxiously, and looking back. When he saw me, James (for his name was James Noble) made a curt and grotesque "boo," and said, "Maister John, this is the mistress; she's got a trouble in her breest—some kind o' an income we're thinkin'."

By this time I saw the woman's face; she was sitting on a sack filled with straw, her husband's plaid round her, and his big-coat with its large white metal buttons over her feet.

I never saw a more unforgettable face—pale, serious, *lonely*, delicate, sweet, without being at all what we call fine. She looked sixty, and had on a mutch, white as snow, with its black ribbon; her silvery, smooth hair setting off her dark-gray eyes—eyes such as one sees only twice or thrice in a lifetime, full of suffering, full also of the overcoming of it: her eyebrows black and delicate, and her mouth firm, patient, and contented, which few mouths ever are.

As I have said, I never saw a more beautiful countenance, or one more subdued to settled quiet. "Ailie," said James, "this is Maister John, the young doctor; Rab's freend, ye ken. We often speak aboot you, doctor." She smiled, and made a movement, but said nothing; and prepared to come down, putting her plaid aside and rising. Had Solomon, in all his glory, been handing down the Queen of Sheba at his palace gate he could not have done it more

daintily, more tenderly, more like a gentleman, than did James the Howgate carrier, when he lifted down Ailie his wife. The contrast of his small, swarthy, weather-beaten, keen, worldly face to hers—pale, subdued, and beautiful—was something wonderful. Rab looked on concerned and puzzled, but ready for anything that might turn up—were it to strangle the nurse, the porter, or even me. Ailie and he seemed great friends.

"As I was sayin' she's got a kind o' trouble in her breest, doctor; wull ye tak' a look at it?" We walked into the consulting-room, all four; Rab grim and comic, willing to be happy and confidential if cause could be shown, willing also to be the reverse, on the same terms. Ailie sat down, undid her open gown and her lawn handkerchief round her neck, and without a word, showed me her right breast. I looked at and examined it carefully—she and James watching me, and Rab eyeing all three. What could I say? there it was, that had once been so soft, so shapely, so white, so gracious and bountiful, so "full of all blessed conditions,"—hard as a stone, a centre of horrid pain, making that pale face with its gray, lucid, reasonable eyes, and its sweet resolved mouth, express the full measure of suffering overcome. Why was that gentle, modest, sweet woman, clean and lovable, condemned by God to bear such a burden?

I got her away to bed. "May Rab and me bide?" said James. "*You* may; and Rab, if he will behave himself." "I'se warrant he's do that, doctor;" and in slank the faithful beast. I wish you could have seen him. There are no such dogs now. He belonged to a lost tribe. As I have said, he was brindled and gray like Rubislaw granite; his hair short, hard, and close, like a lion's; his body thick set, like a little bull—a sort of compressed Hercules of a

dog. He must have been ninety pounds' weight, at the least; he had a large blunt head; his muzzle black as night, his mouth blacker than any night, a tooth or two—being all he had—gleaming out of his jaws of darkness. His head was scarred with the records of old wounds, a sort of series of fields of battle all over it; one eye out, one ear cropped as close as was Archbishop Leighton's father's; the remaining eye had the power of two; and above it, and in constant communication with it, was a tattered rag of an ear, which was forever unfurling itself, like an old flag; and then that bud of a tail, about one inch long, if it could in any sense be said to be long, being as broad as long—the mobility, the instantaneousness of that bud were very funny and surprising, and its expressive twinklings and winkings, the intercommunications between the eye, the ear, and it, were of the oddest and swiftest.

Rab had the dignity and simplicity of great size; and having fought his way along the road to absolute supremacy, he was as mighty in his own line as Julius Cæsar or the Duke of Wellington, and had the gravity of all great fighters.

You must have often observed the likeness of certain men to certain animals, and of certain dogs to men. Now, I never looked at Rab without thinking of the great Baptist preacher, Andrew Fuller. The same large, heavy, menacing, combative, sombre, honest countenance, the same deep inevitable eye, the same look—as of thunder asleep, but ready—neither a dog nor a man to be trifled with.

Next day, my master, the surgeon, examined Ailie. There was no doubt it must kill her, and soon. It could be removed—it might never return—it would give her speedy relief—she should have it done. She curtsied, looked at James, and said, "When?" "To-morrow,"

said the kind surgeon—a man of few words. She and James and Rab and I retired. I noticed that he and she spoke little, but seemed to anticipate everything in each other. The following day, at noon, the students came in, hurrying up the great stair. At the first landing-place, on a small well-known blackboard, was a bit of paper fastened by wafers, and many remains of old wafers beside it. On the paper were the words—"An operation to-day. J. B. *Clerk*."

Up ran the youths, eager to secure good places: in they crowded, full of interest and talk. "What's the case?" "Which side is it?"

Don't think them heartless; they are neither better nor worse than you or I; they get over their professional horrors, and into their proper work—and in them pity—as an *emotion*, ending in itself or at best in tears and a long-drawn breath, lessens, while pity as a *motive*, is quickened, and gains power and purpose. It is well for poor human nature that it is so.

The operating theatre is crowded; much talk and fun, and all the cordiality and stir of youth. The surgeon with his staff of assistants is there. In comes Ailie: one look at her quiets and abates the eager students. That beautiful old woman is too much for them; they sit down, and are dumb, and gaze at her. These rough boys feel the power of her presence. She walks in quickly, but without haste; dressed in her mutch, her neckerchief, her white dimity short-gown, her black bombazine petticoat, showing her white worsted stockings and her carpet-shoes. Behind her was James with Rab. James sat down in the distance, and took that huge and noble head between his knees. Rab looked perplexed and dangerous; forever cocking his ear and dropping it as fast.

Ailie stepped up on a seat, and laid herself on the table, as her friend the surgeon told her; arranged herself, gave a rapid look at James, shut her eyes, rested herself on me, and took my hand. The operation was at once begun; it was necessarily slow; and chloroform—one of God's best gifts to his suffering children—was then unknown. The surgeon did his work. The pale face showed its pain, but was still and silent. Rab's soul was working within him; he saw that something strange was going on—blood flowing from his mistress, and she suffering; his ragged ear was up, and importunate; he growled and gave now and then a sharp impatient yelp; he would have liked to have done something to that man. But James had him firm, and gave him a *glower* from time to time, and an intimation of a possible kick;—all the better for James, it kept his eye and his mind off Ailie.

It is over: she is dressed, steps gently and decently down from the table, looks for James; then, turning to the surgeon and the students, she curtsies—and in a low, clear voice, begs their pardon if she has behaved ill. The students—all of us—wept like children; the surgeon happed her up carefully—and, resting on James and me, Ailie went to her room, Rab following. We put her to bed. James took off his heavy shoes, crammed with tackets, heel-capt and toe-capt, and put them carefully under the table, saying, "Maister John, I'm for nane o'yer strynge nurse bodies for Ailie. I'll be her nurse, and I'll gang aboot on my stockin' soles as canny as pussy." And so he did; and handy and clever, and swift and tender as any woman, was that horny-handed, snell, peremptory little man. Everything she got he gave her: he seldom slept; and often I saw his small shrewd eyes out of the darkness, fixed on her. As before, they spoke little.

Rab behaved well, never moving, showing us how meek and gentle he could be, and occasionally, in his sleep, letting us know that he was demolishing some adversary. He took a walk with me every day, generally to the Candlemaker Row; but he was sombre and mild; declined doing battle, though some fit cases offered, and indeed submitted to sundry indignities; and was always very ready to turn, and came faster back, and trotted up the stair with much lightness, and went straight to that door.

Jess, the mare, had been sent, with her weather-worn cart, to Howgate, and had doubtless her own dim and placid meditations and confusions, on the absence of her master and Rab, and her unnatural freedom from the road and her cart.

For some days Ailie did well. The wound healed "by the first intention;" for as James said, "Oor Ailie's skin's ower clean to beil." The students came in quiet and anxious, and surrounded her bed. She said she liked to see their young, honest faces. The surgeon dressed her, and spoke to her in his own short kind way, pitying her through his eyes, Rab and James outside the circle—Rab being now reconciled, and even cordial, and having made up his mind that as yet nobody required worrying, but, as you may suppose, *semper paratus*.

So far well: but, four days after the operation, my patient had a sudden and long shivering, a "groosin'," as she called it. I saw her soon after; her eyes were too bright, her cheek coloured; she was restless, and ashamed of being so; the balance was lost; mischief had begun. On looking at the wound, a blush of red told the secret: her pulse was rapid, her breathing anxious and quick, she wasn't herself, as she said, and was vexed at her restlessness. We tried what we could; James did everything, was everywhere; never in the

way, never out of it; Rab subsided under the table into a dark place, and was motionless, all but his eye, which followed every one. Ailie got worse; began to wander in her mind, gently; was more demonstrative in her ways to James, rapid in her questions, and sharp at times. He was vexed, and said, "She was never that way afore; no, never." For a time she knew her head was wrong, and was always asking our pardon—the dear, gentle old woman: then delirium set in strong, without pause. Her brain gave way, and then came that terrible spectacle—

> "The intellectual power, through words and things,
> Went sounding on its dim and perilous way."

she sang bits of old songs and Psalms, stopping suddenly, mingling the Psalms of David and the diviner words of his Son and Lord, with homely odds and ends and scraps of ballads.

Nothing more touching, or in a sense more strangely beautiful, did I ever witness. Her tremulous, rapid, affectionate, eager, Scotch voice—the swift, aimless, bewildered mind, the baffled utterance, the bright and perilous eye; some wild words, some household cares, something for James, the names of the dead, Rab called rapidly and in a "fremyt" voice, and he starting up surprised, and slinking off as if he were to blame somehow, or had been dreaming he heard; many eager questions and beseechings which James and I could make nothing of, and on which she seemed to set her all, and then sink back ununderstood. It was very sad, but better than many things that are not called sad. James hovered about, put out and miserable, but active and exact as ever; read to her when there was a lull, short bits from the Psalms, prose and metre, chanting the latter in his own rude and serious way, showing great

knowledge of the fit words, bearing up like a man, and doating over her as his "ain Ailie." "Ailie, ma woman!" "Ma ain bonnie wee dawtie!"

The end was drawing on: the golden bowl was breaking; the silver cord was fast being loosed—that *animula blandula, vagula, hospes, comesque*, was about to flee. The body and the soul—companions for sixty years—were being sundered, and taking leave. She was walking alone, through the valley of that shadow, into which one day we must all enter—and yet she was not alone, for we know whose rod and staff were comforting her.

One night she had fallen quiet, and as we hoped, asleep; her eyes were shut. We put down the gas and sat watching her. Suddenly she sat up in bed, and taking a bed-gown which was lying on it rolled up, she held it eagerly to her breast—to the right side. We could see her eyes bright with a surprising tenderness and joy, bending over this bundle of clothes. She held it as a woman holds her sucking child; opening out her night-gown impatiently, and holding it close, and brooding over it, and murmuring foolish little words, as over one whom his mother comforteth, and who sucks and is satisfied. It was pitiful and strange to see her wasted dying look, keen and yet vague—her immense love.

"Preserve me!" groaned James, giving way. And then she rocked back and forward, as if to make it sleep, hushing it, and wasting on it her infinite fondness. "Wae's me, doctor; I declare she's thinkin' it's that bairn." "What bairn?" "The only bairn we ever had; our wee Mysie, and she's in the Kingdom, forty years and mair." It was plainly true: the pain in the breast, telling its urgent story to a bewildered, ruined brain, was misread and mistaken; it suggested to her the uneasiness of a breast full of milk

and then the child; and so again once more they were together and she had her ain wee Mysie in her bosom.

This was the close. She sank rapidly: the delirium left her; but as, she whispered, she was "clean silly;" it was the lightening before the final darkness. After having for some time lain still—her eyes shut, she said "James!" He came close to her, and lifting up her calm, clear, beautiful eyes, she gave him a long look, turned to me kindly but shortly, looked for Rab but could not see him, then turned to her husband again, as if she would never leave off looking, shut her eyes, and composed herself. She lay for some time breathing quick, and passed away so gently, that when we thought she was gone, James, in his old-fashioned way, held the mirror to her face. After a long pause, one small spot of dimness was breathed out; it vanished away, and never returned, leaving the blank clear darkness of the mirror without a stain. "What is our life? it is even a vapour, which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Rab all this time had been full awake and motionless; he came forward beside us: Ailie's hand, which James had held, was hanging down, it was soaked with his tears; Rab licked it all over carefully, looked at her, and returned to his place under the table.

James and I sat, I don't know how long, but for some time—saying nothing: he started up abruptly, and with some noise went to the table, and putting his right fore and middle fingers each into a shoe, pulled them out, and put them on, breaking one of the leather latchets, and muttering in anger, "I never did the like o' that afore!"

I believe he never did; nor after either. "Rab!" he said roughly, and pointing with his thumb to the bottom of the bed. Rab leapt up, and settled himself; his head

and eye to the dead face. "Maister John, ye'll wait for me," said the carrier; and disappeared in the darkness, thundering downstairs in his heavy shoes. I ran to a front window; there he was, already round the house, and out at the gate, fleeing like a shadow.

I was afraid about him, and yet not afraid; so I sat down beside Rab, and being wearied, fell asleep. I awoke from a sudden noise outside. It was November, and there had been a heavy fall of snow. Rab was *in statu quo;* he heard the noise too, and plainly knew it, but never moved. I looked out; and there, at the gate, in the dim morning—for the sun was not up—was Jess and the cart—a cloud of steam rising from the old mare. I did not see James; he was already at the door, and came up the stairs and met me. It was less than three hours since he left, and he must have posted out—who knows how?—to Howgate, full nine miles off; yoked Jess, and driven her astonished into town. He had an armful of blankets and was streaming with perspiration. He nodded to me, spread out on the floor two pairs of clean old blankets having at their corners, "A. G., 1794," in large letters in red worsted. These were the initials of Alison Græme, and James may have looked in at her from without—himself unseen but not unthought of—when he was "wat, wat, and weary," and after having walked many a mile over the hills, may have seen her sitting, while "a' the lave were sleepin';" and by the firelight working her name on the blankets, for her ain James's bed.

He motioned Rab down, and taking his wife in his arms, laid her in the blankets, and happed her carefully and firmly up, leaving the face uncovered; and then lifting her, he nodded again sharply to me, and with a resolved but utterly miserable face, strode along the passage, and

downstairs, followed by Rab. I followed with a light; but he didn't need it. I went out, holding stupidly the candle in my hand in the calm frosty air; we were soon at the gate. I could have helped him, but I saw he was not to be meddled with, and he was strong, and did not need it. He laid her down as tenderly, as safely, as he had lifted her out ten days before—as tenderly as when he had her first in his arms when she was only "A. G."—sorted her, leaving that beautiful sealed face open to the heavens; and then taking Jess by the head, he moved away. He did not notice me, neither did Rab, who presided behind the cart.

I stood till they passed through the long shadow of the College, and turned up Nicholson Street. I heard the solitary cart sound through the streets, and die away and come again; and I returned, thinking of that company going up Libberton Brae, then along Roslin Muir, the morning light touching the Pentlands and making them like on-looking ghosts; then down the hill through Auchindinny woods, past "haunted Woodhouselee"; and as daybreak came sweeping up the bleak Lammermuirs, and fell on his own door, the company would stop, and James would take the key, and lift Ailie up again, laying her on her own bed, and, having put Jess up, would return with Rab and shut the door.

James buried his wife, with his neighbours mourning, Rab inspecting the solemnity from a distance. It was snow, and that black ragged hole would look strange in the midst of the swelling spotless cushion of white. James looked after everything; then rather suddenly fell ill, and took to bed; was insensible when the doctor came, and soon died. A sort of low fever was prevailing in the village, and his want of sleep, his exhaustion, and

his misery, made him apt to take it. The grave was not difficult to reopen. A fresh fall of snow had again made all things white and smooth; Rab once more looked on, and slunk home to the stable.

And what of Rab? I asked for him next week of the new carrier who got the goodwill of James's business, and was now master of Jess and her cart. "How's Rab?" He put me off, and said rather rudely, "What's *your* business wi' the dowg?" I was not to be so put off. "Where's Rab?" He, getting confused and red, and intermeddling with his hair, said, " 'Deed, sir, Rab's deid." "Dead! what did he die of?" "Weel, sir," said he, getting redder, "he didna exactly dee; he was killed. I had to brain him wi' a rack-pin; there was nae doin' wi' him. He lay in the treviss wi' the mear, and wadna come oot. I tempit him wi' kail and meat, but he wad tak naething, and keepit me frae feedin' the beast, and he was aye gur gurrin', and grup gruppin' me by the legs. I was laith to make awa wi' the auld dowg, his like wasna atween this and Thornhill —but, 'deed, sir, I could do naething else." I believed him. Fit end for Rab, quick and complete. His teeth and his friends gone, why should he keep the peace, and be civil?

XI

PETER RUGG, THE MISSING MAN*

SIR—Agreeably to my promise, I now relate to you all the particulars of the lost man and child which I have been able to collect. It is entirely owing to the humane interest you seemed to take in the report, that I have pursued the inquiry to the following result.

You may remember that business called me to Boston in the summer of 1820. I sailed in the packet to Providence, and when I arrived there I learned that every seat in the stage was engaged. I was thus obliged either to wait a few hours or accept a seat with the driver, who civilly offered me that accommodation. Accordingly I took my seat by his side, and soon found him intelligent and communicative.

When we had travelled about ten miles, the horses suddenly threw their ears on their necks, as flat as a hare's. Said the driver, "Have you a surtout with you?" "No," said I; "why do you ask?" "You will want one soon," said he; 'do you observe the ears of all the horses?" "Yes, and was just about to ask the reason." "They see the storm-breeder, and we shall see him soon." At this moment there was not a cloud visible in the firmament. Soon after a small speck appeared in the road. "There," said my companion, "comes the storm-breeder; he always leaves a Scotch mist behind him. By many a wet jacket do I remember him. I suppose the poor fellow sufters much himself, much more than is known to the world." Presently

* From Jonathan Dunwell of New York, to Mr. Herman Krauft.

a man with a child beside him, with a large black horse, and a weather-beaten chair, once built for a chaise body, passed in great haste, apparently at the rate of twelve miles an hour. He seemed to grasp the reins of his horse with firmness, and appeared to anticipate his speed. He seemed dejected, and looked anxiously at the passengers, particularly at the stage-driver and myself. In a moment after he passed us, the horses' ears were up and bent themselves forward so that they nearly met. "Who is that man?" said I; "he seems in great trouble." "Nobody knows who is he, but his person and the child are familiar to me. I have met them more than a hundred times, and have been so often asked the way to Boston by that man, even when he was travelling directly from that town, that of late I have refused any communication with him, and that is the reason he gave me such a fixed look." "But does he never stop anywhere?" "I have never known him to stop anywhere longer than to inquire the way to Boston; and, let him be where he may, he will tell you he cannot stay a moment, for he must reach Boston that night."

We were now ascending a high hill in Walpole, and as we had a fair view of the heavens, I was rather disposed to jeer the driver for thinking of his surtout, as not a cloud as big as a marble could be discerned. "Do you look," said he, "in the direction whence the man came, that is the place to look; the storm never meets him, it follows him." We presently approached another hill, and when at the height, the driver pointed out in an eastern direction a little black speck as big as a hat. "There," said he, "is the seed storm; we may possibly reach Polley's before it reaches us, but the wanderer and his child will go to Providence through rain, thunder, and lightning." And now the horses, as though taught by instinct, hastened with increased

speed. The little black cloud came on rolling over the turnpike, and doubled and trebled itself in all directions. The appearance of this cloud attracted the notice of all the passengers; for after it had spread itself to a great bulk, it suddenly became more limited in circumference, grew more compact, dark, and consolidated. And now the successive flashes of chain lightning caused the whole cloud to appear like a sort of irregular network, and displayed a thousand fantastic images. The driver bespoke my attention to a remarkable configuration in the cloud; he said every flash of lightning near its centre discovered to him distinctly the form of a man sitting in an open carriage drawn by a black horse. But in truth I saw no such thing. The man's fancy was doubtless at fault. It is a very common thing for the imagination to paint for the senses, both in the visible and invisible world.

In the meantime the distant thunder gave notice of a shower at hand, and just as we reached Polley's tavern the rain poured down in torrents. It was soon over, the cloud passing in the direction of the turnpike toward Providence. In a few moments after, a respectable-looking man in a chaise stopped at the door. The man and child in the chair having excited some little sympathy among the passengers, the gentleman was asked if he had observed them. He said he had met them; that the man seemed bewildered, and inquired the way to Boston; that he was driving at great speed, as though he expected to outstrip the tempest; that the moment he had passed him a thunderclap broke distinctly over the man's head and seemed to envelop both man and child, horse and carriage. "I stopped," said the gentleman, "supposing the lightning had struck him, but the horse only seemed to loom up and increase his speed, and, as well as I could judge, he travelled just as fast as the

thunder cloud." While this man was speaking, a peddler with a cart of tin merchandise came up, all dripping; and, on being questioned, he said he had met that man and carriage, within a fortnight, in four different States; that at each time he had inquired the way to Boston; and that a thunder shower like the present had each time deluged him, his wagon and his wares, setting his tin pots, etc., afloat, so that he had determined to get marine insurance done for the future. But that which excited his surprise most was the strange conduct of his horse, for that, long before he could distinguish the man in the chair, his own horse stood still in the road and flung back his ears. "In short," said the peddler, "I wish never to see that man and horse again; they do not look to me as if they belonged to this world."

This is all that I could learn at that time; and the occurrence soon after would have become with me like one of those things which had never happened, had I not, as I stood recently on the doorstep of Bennett's Hotel in Hartford, heard a man say, "There goes Peter Rugg and his child! he looks wet and weary, and farther from Boston than ever." I was satisfied it was the same man that I had seen more than three years before; for whoever has once seen Peter Rugg can never after be deceived as to his identity. "Peter Rugg!" said I, "and who is Peter Rugg?" "That," said the stranger, "is more than anyone can tell exactly. He is a famous traveller, held in light esteem by all inn-holders, for he never stops to eat, drink, or sleep. I wonder why the Government does not employ him to carry the mail." "Ay," said a bystander, "that is a thought bright only on one side. How long would it take, in that case, to send a letter to Boston? For Peter has already, to my knowledge, been more than twenty years travelling to that place."

"But," said I, "does the man never stop anywhere, does he never converse with anyone? I saw the same man more than three years since, near Providence, and I heard a strange story about him. Pray, sir, give me some account of this man." "Sir," said the stranger, "those who know the most respecting that man say the least. I have heard it asserted that heaven sometimes sets a mark on a man, either for judgment or trial. Under which Peter Rugg now labours I cannot say; therefore I am rather inclined to pity than to judge." "You speak like a humane man," said I, "and if you have known him so long, I pray you will give me some account of him. Has his appearance much altered in that time?" "Why, yes; he looks as though he never ate, drank, or slept; and his child looks older than himself; and he looks like time broke off from eternity and anxious to gain a resting-place." "And how does his horse look?" said I. "As for his horse, he looks fatter and gayer, and shows more animation and courage, than he did twenty years ago. The last time Rugg spoke to me he inquired how far it was to Boston. I told him just one hundred miles. 'Why,' said he, 'how can you deceive me so? It is cruel to deceive a traveller. I have lost my way. Pray direct me the nearest way to Boston.' I repeated it was one hundred miles. 'How can you say so?' said he. 'I was told last evening it was but fifty, and I have travelled all night.' 'But,' said I, ''you are now travelling from Boston. You must turn back.' 'Alas!' said he, 'it is all turn back! Boston shifts with the wind, and plays all around the compass. One man tells me it is to the east, another to the west; and the guide-posts, too, they all point the wrong way.' 'But will you not stop and rest?' said I; 'you seem wet and weary.' 'Yes,' said he, 'it has been foul weather since I left home.' 'Stop, then, and refresh yourself.' 'I

must not stop, I must reach home to-night, if possible, though I think you must be mistaken in the distance to Boston.' He then gave the reins to his horse, which he restrained with difficulty, and disappeared in a moment. A few days afterwards I met the man a little this side of Claremont, winding around the hills in Unity, at the rate, I believe, of twenty miles an hour."

"Is Peter Rugg his real name, or has he accidentally gained that name?" "I know not, but presume he will not deny his name; you can ask him, for see, he has turned his horse and is passing this way." In a moment a dark-coloured, high-spirited horse approached, and would have passed without stopping, but I had resolved to speak to Peter Rugg, or whoever the man might be. Accordingly, I stepped into the street, and as the horse approached I made a feint of stopping him. The man immediately reined in his horse. "Sir," said I, "may I be so bold as to inquire if you are not Mr. Rugg? for I think I have seen you before." "My name is Peter Rugg," said he; "I have unfortunately lost my way; I am wet and weary, and will take it kindly of you to direct me to Boston." "You live in Boston, do you, and in what street?" "In Middle Street." "When did you leave Boston?" "I cannot tell precisely; it seems a considerable time." "But how did you and your child become so wet? it has not rained here to-day." "It has just rained a heavy shower up the river. But I shall not reach Boston to-night if I tarry. Would you advise me to take the old road, or the turnpike?" "Why, the old road is one hundred and seventeen miles, and the turnpike is ninety-seven." "How can you say so? you impose on me; it is wrong to trifle with a traveller; you know it is but forty miles from Newburyport to Boston." "But this is not Newburyport; this is Hartford." "Do not deceive me, sir.

Is not this town Newburyport, and the river that I have been following the Merrimac?" "No, sir; this is Hartford, and the river the Connecticut." He wrung his hands and looked incredulous. "Have the rivers, too, changed their courses as the cities have changed places? But see, the clouds are gathering in the south, and we shall have a rainy night. Ah, that fatal oath!" He would tarry no longer. His impatient horse leaped off, his hind flanks rising like wings—he seemed to devour all before him and to scorn all behind.

I had now, as I thought, discovered a clue to the history of Peter Rugg, and I determined, the next time my business called me to Boston, to make a further inquiry. Soon after I was enabled to collect the following particulars from Mrs. Croft, an aged lady in Middle Street, who has resided in Boston during the last twenty years. Her narration is this: The last summer a person, just at twilight, stopped at the door of the late Mrs. Rugg. Mrs. Croft, on coming to the door, perceived a stranger, with a child by his side, in an old, weatherbeaten carriage, with a black horse. The stranger asked for Mrs. Rugg, and was informed that Mrs. Rugg had died, at a good old age, more than twenty years before that time. The stranger replied, "How can you deceive me so? do ask Mrs. Rugg to step to the door." "Sir, I assure you Mrs. Rugg has not lived here these nineteen years; no one lives here but myself, and my name is Betsey Croft." The stranger paused, and looked up and down the street, and said, "Though the painting is rather faded, this looks like my house." "Yes," said the child, "that is the stone before the door that I used to sit on to eat my bread and milk." "But," said the stranger, "it seems to be on the wrong side of the street. Indeed, everything here seems to be misplaced. The streets are all changed, the

people are all changed, the town seems changed, and, what is strangest of all, Catharine Rugg has deserted her husband and child." "Pray," said the stranger, "has John Foy come home from sea? He went a long voyage; he is my kinsman. If I could see him, he could give me some account of Mrs. Rugg." "Sir," said Mrs. Croft, "I never heard of John Foy. Where did he live?" "Just above here, in Orange-Tree Lane." "There is no such place in this neighbourhood." "What do you tell me! Are the streets gone? Orange-Tree Lane is at the head of Hanover Street, near Pemberton's Hill." "There is no such lane now." "Madam! you cannot be serious. But you doubtless know my brother, William Rugg. He lives in Royal Exchange Lane, near King Street." "I know of no such lane; and I I am sure there is no such street as King Street in this town." "No such street as King Street? Why, woman! you mock me. You may as well tell me there is no King George. However, madam, you see I am wet and weary. I must find a resting place. I will go to Hart's tavern, near the market." "Which market, sir? for you seem perplexed; we have several markets." "You know there is but one market, near the town dock." "Oh, the old market. But no such man as Hart has kept there these twenty years."

Here the stranger seemed disconcerted, and muttered to himself quite audibly: "Strange mistake! How much this looks like the town of Boston! It certainly has a great resemblance to it; but I perceive my mistake now. Some other Mrs. Rugg, some other Middle Street." Then said he, "Madam, can you direct me to Boston?" "Why, this is Boston, the city of Boston. I know of no other Boston." "City of Boston it may be, but it is not the Boston where I live. I recollect now, I came over a bridge instead of a ferry. Pray what bridge is that I just came over?" "It

is Charles River Bridge." "I perceive my mistake; there is a ferry between Boston and Charlestown, there is no bridge. Ah, I perceive my mistake. If I was in Boston, my horse would carry me directly to my own door. But my horse shows by his impatience that he is in a strange place. Absurd, that I should have mistaken this place for the old town of Boston! It is a much finer city than the town of Boston. It has been built long since Boston. I fancy Boston must lie at a distance from this city, as the good woman seems ignorant of it." At these words his horse began to chafe, and strike the pavement with his fore feet; the stranger seemed a little bewildered, and said "No home to-night," and, giving the reins to his horse, passed up the street, and I saw no more of him.

It was evident that the generation to which Peter Rugg belonged had passed away.

This was all the account of Peter Rugg I could obtain from Mrs. Croft; but she directed me to an elderly man, Mr. James Felt, who lived near her, and who had kept a record of the principal occurrences for the last fifty years. At my request she sent for him; and, after I had related to him the object of my inquiry, Mr. Felt told me he had known Rugg in his youth; that his disappearance had caused some surprise; but as it sometimes happens that men run away, sometimes to be rid of others, and sometimes to be rid of themselves; and as Rugg took his child with him, and his own horse and chair; and as it did not appear that any creditors made a stir, the occurrence soon mingled itself in the stream of oblivion; and Rugg and his child, horse and chair, were soon forgotten. "It is true," said Mr. Felt, "sundry stories grew out of Rugg's affair, whether true or false I cannot tell; but stranger things have happened in my day, without even a newspaper notice."

"Sir," said I, "Peter Rugg is now living. I have lately seen Peter Rugg and his child, horse and chair; therefore I pray you to relate to me all you know or ever heard of him." "Why, my friend," said James Felt, "that Peter Rugg is now a living man I will not deny; but that you have seen Peter Rugg and his child is impossible, if you mean a small child, for Jenny Rugg, if living, must be at least—let me see—Boston Massacre, 1770—Jenny Rugg was about ten years old. Why, sir, Jenny Rugg if living must be more than sixty years of age. That Peter Rugg is living is highly probable, as he was only ten years older than myself; and I was only eighty last March, and I am as likely to live twenty years longer as any man." Here I perceived that Mr. Felt was in his dotage, and I despaired of gaining any intelligence from him on which I could depend.

I took my leave of Mrs. Croft, and proceeded to my lodgings at the Marlborough Hotel.

If Peter Rugg, thought I, has been travelling since the Boston Massacre, there is no reason why he should not travel to the end of time. If the present generation know little of him, the next will know less, and Peter and his child will have no hold on this world.

In the course of the evening I related my adventure in Middle Street. "Ha!" said one of the company, smiling, "do you really think you have seen Peter Rugg? I have heard my grandfather speak of him as though he seriously believed his own story." "Sir," said I, "pray let us compare your grandfather's story of Mr. Rugg with my own." "Peter Rugg, sir, if my grandfather was worthy of credit, once lived in Middle Street, in this city. He was a man in comfortable circumstances, had a wife and one daughter, and was generally esteemed for his sober life and manners. But unhappily his temper at times was altogether ungovern-

able, and then his language was terrible. In these fits of passion, if a door stood in his way he would never do less than kick a panel through. He would sometimes throw his heels over his head, and come down on his feet, uttering oaths in a circle. And thus, in a rage, he was the first who performed a somerset, and did what others have since learned to do for merriment and money. Once Rugg was seen to bite a tenpenny nail in halves. In those days everybody, both men and boys, wore wigs; and Peter, at these moments of violent passion, would become so profane that his wig would rise up from his head. Some said it was on account of his terrible language; others accounted for it in a more philosophical way, and said it was caused by the expansion of his scalp, as violent passion, we know, will swell the veins and expand the head. While these fits were on him, Rugg had no respect for heaven or earth. Except this infirmity, all agreed that Rugg was a good sort of a man; for when his fits were over, nobody was so ready to commend a placid temper as Peter.

"It was late in autumn, one morning, that Rugg, in his own chair, with a fine large bay horse, took his daughter and proceeded to Concord. On his return a violent storm overtook him. At dark he stopped in Menotomy (now West Cambridge), at the door of a Mr. Cutter, a friend of his, who urged him to tarry overnight. On Rugg's declining to stop, Mr. Cutter urged him vehemently. 'Why, Mr. Rugg,' said Cutter, 'the storm is overwhelming you; the night is exceeding dark; your little daughter will perish; you are in an open chair, and the tempest is increasing.' '*Let the storm increase*,' said Rugg, with a fearful oath, '*I will see home to-night, in spite of the last tempest! or may I never see home.*' At these words he gave his whip to his high-spirited horse, and disappeared in a moment.

But Peter Rugg did not reach home that night, nor the next; nor, when he became a missing man, could he ever be traced beyond Mr. Cutter's in Menotomy. For a long time after, on every dark and stormy night, the wife of Peter Rugg would fancy she heard the crack of a whip, and the fleet tread of a horse, and the rattling of a carriage, passing her door. The neighbours, too, heard the same noises, and some said they knew it was Rugg's horse; the tread on the pavement was perfectly familiar to them. This occurred so repeatedly that at length the neighbours watched with lanterns, and saw the real Peter Rugg, with his own horse and chair, and child sitting beside him, pass directly before his own door, his head turning toward his house, and himself making every effort to stop his horse, but in vain. The next day the friends of Mrs. Rugg exerted themselves to find her husband and child. They inquired at every public house and stable in town; but it did not appear that Rugg made any stay in Boston. No one, after Rugg had passed his own door, could give any account of him; though it was asserted by some that the clatter of Rugg's horse and carriage over the pavements shook the houses on both sides of the street. And this is credible, if, indeed, Rugg's horse and carriage did pass on that night. For at this day, in many of the streets, a loaded truck or team in passing will shake the houses like an earthquake. However, Rugg's neighbours never afterward watched again; some of them treated it all as a delusion, and thought no more of it. Others, of a different opinion, shook their heads and said nothing. Thus Rugg and his child, horse and chair, were soon forgotten; and probably many in the neighbourhood never heard a word on the subject.

"There was indeed a rumour that Rugg afterward was seen in Connecticut, between Suffield and Hartford, passing

through the country like a streak of chalk. This gave occasion to Rugg's friends to make further inquiry But the more they inquired, the more they were baffled. If they heard of Rugg one day in Connecticut, the next day they heard of him winding around the hills in New Hampshire; and soon after, a man in a chair, with a small child, exactly answering the description of Peter Rugg, would be seen in Rhode Island, inquiring the way to Boston.

"But that which chiefly gave a colour of mystery to the story of Peter Rugg was the affair at Charlestown bridge. The toll-gatherer asserted that sometimes, on the darkest and most stormy nights, when no object could be discerned, about the time Rugg was missing, a horse and wheel carriage, with a noise equal to a troop, would at midnight, in utter contempt of the rates of toll, pass over the bridge. This occurred so frequently that the toll-gatherer resolved to attempt a discovery. Soon after, at the usual time, apparently the same horse and carriage approached the bridge from Charlestown square. The toll-gatherer, prepared, took his stand as near the middle of the bridge as he dared, with a large three-legged stool in his hand. As the appearance passed, he threw the stool at the horse, but heard nothing except the noise of the stool skipping across the bridge. The toll-gatherer on the next day asserted that the stool went directly through the body of the horse, and he persisted in that belief ever after. Whether Rugg, or whoever the person was, ever passed the bridge again, the toll-gatherer would never tell; and when questioned, seemed anxious to waive the subject. And thus Peter Rugg and his child, horse and carriage, remain a mystery to this day."

This, sir, is all that I could learn of Peter Rugg in Boston. . . .

GUY, EARL OF WARWICK

PART II—LEGENDS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TO

"LEGENDS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW"

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INTRODUCTION

TO

"LEGENDS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW"

If we knew how the words in our language were made and what they have meant to successive generations of the men and women who have used them, we should have a new and very interesting kind of history to read. For words, like all other creations of man, were not deliberately manufactured to meet a need, as are the various parts of a bicycle or of an automobile; but grew gradually and slowly out of experiences which compelled their production. For it is one of the evidences of the brotherhood of men that, either by the pressure of necessity or of the instinct to describe to others what has happened to ourself and so make common property of personal experience, no interesting or influential or significant things can befall a man that is not accompanied by a desire to communicate it to others.

The word legend has a very interesting history, which sheds light not only on its origin but on early habits of thought and customs. It is derived from the Latin verb *legere*, which means "to read." As legends are often passed down by word of mouth and are not reduced to writing until they have been known for centuries by great numbers of people, it seems difficult at first glance to see any connection between the Latin word and its English descendant. In Russia and other countries, where large populations live remote from cities and are practically without books and newspapers, countless stories are told by peasant mothers to their children, by reciters

or semi-professional story-tellers, which have since been put into print. For a good many hundred years, probably, the vast majority of legends were not read: they were heard.

When we understand, however, what the habits of people were in the early Christian centuries and what the early legends were about, the original meaning of the word is not only clear but throws light on the history of this fascinating form of literature. The early legends, as a rule, had to do with religious people or with places which had religious associations; they were largely concerned with the saints and were freely used in churches for the instruction of the people. In all churches selections from some book or books are used as part of the service; readings from the Old and New Testament are included in the worship of all churches in Christendom. In the earliest times not only were Lessons from the Old Testament and the Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament read, but letters of bishops and selections from other writings which were regarded as profitable for religious instruction. Later stories of the saints and passages from the numerous lives which appeared were read at different services and contributed greatly to their interest. The first legends in Christian countries were incidents from the lives of the saints and were included in the selections made from various writings for public worship; these selections were called *legends*. The history of the word makes clear, therefore, the origin and early history of the class of stories which we call legends.

The use of the stories at church services led to the collection, orderly arrangement and reshaping of a great mass of material which grew rapidly because so many people were interested in these semi-religious tales. In

the beginning the stories had, as a rule, some basis in fact, though it was often very slight. As time went on the element of fact grew smaller and the element of fiction larger; stories which were originally very short were expanded into long tales and became highly imaginative. In the Thirteenth Century the *Legenda Aurea*, or Golden Legend, which became one of the most popular books of the Middle Ages, appeared. In time, as the taste for this kind of writing grew, the word legend came to include any story which, under a historical form, gave an account of an historical or imaginary person.

During the Middle Ages verse-making was very popular and very widely practised; for versification is very easy when people are in the habit of using it freely, and a verse is much more easily remembered than a line of prose. For many generations legends were versified. It must be remembered that verse and poetry are often very far apart; and poetry is as difficult to compose as verse is easy. The versified legends were very rarely poetic; they were simply narratives in verse. Occasionally men of poetic genius took hold of these old stories and gave them beautiful forms as did the German poet Hartmann von Aue in "Der Arme Heinrich." With the tremendous agitation which found expression in the Reformation, interest in legends died out, and was not renewed until the Eighteenth Century, when men and women, grown weary of artificial and mechanical forms of literature, turned again to the old stories and songs which were the creation of less self-conscious ages, With the revival of interest in ballads, folk-stories, fairy stories and myths came a revival of interest in legends.

The myths were highly imaginative and poetic ex-

planations of the world and of the life of man in it at a time when scientific knowledge and habits of thought had not come into existence. The fairy story was "a free poetic dealing with realities in accordance with the law of mental growth, . . . a poetic wording of the facts of life, . . . an endeavour to shape the facts of the world to meet the needs of the imagination, the cravings of the heart." The legend, dealing originally with incidents in the lives of the saints and with places made sacred by association with holy men, has, as a rule, some slight historical basis; is cast in narrative form and told as a record of fact; and, in cases where it is entirely imaginative, deals with some popular type of character like Robin Hood or Rip Van Winkle; or with some mysterious or tragic event, as Tennyson's "Idyls of the King" are poetic renderings of part of a great mass of legends which grew up about a little group of imaginary or semi-historical characters; Longfellow's "Golden Legend" is a modern rendering of a very old mediæval tale; Irving's "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" is an example of purely imaginative prose, and Heine's "Lorelei" of a purely imaginative poetic legend.

The legend is not so sharply defined as the myth and the fairy story, and it is not always possible to separate it from these old forms of stories; but it always concerns itself with one or more characters; it assumes to be historical; it is almost always old and haunts some locality like a ghost; and it has a large admixture of fiction, even where it is not wholly fictitious. Like the myth and fairy story it throws light on the mind and character of the age that produced it; it is part of the history of the unfolding of the human mind in the world; and, above all, it is interesting.

HAMILTON W. MABIE.

Legends Every Child Should Know

CHAPTER I

WIGWAM LEGEND OF HIAWATHA*

ON THE banks of Tioto, or Cross Lake, resided an eminent man who bore the name of Hiawatha, or the Wise Man.

This name was given him, as its meaning indicates, on account of his great wisdom in council and power in war. Hiawatha was of high and mysterious origin. He had a canoe which would move without paddles, obedient to his will, and which he kept with great care and never used except when he attended the general council of the tribes. It was from Hiawatha the people learned to raise corn and beans; through his instructions they were enabled to remove obstructions from the water courses and clear their fishing grounds; and by him they were helped to get the mastery over the great monsters which overran the country. The people listened to him with ever increasing delight; and he gave them wise laws and maxims from the Great Spirit, for he had been second to him only in power previous to his taking up his dwelling with mankind.

Having selected the Onondagas for his tribe, years

* This story is ascribed to Abraham le Fort, an Onondaga chief, a graduate of Geneva College. The poem of Longfellow has given it general interest. Hiawatha is an example of the intellectual capacity of one of that race of whom it has been said "Take these Indians in their owne trimme and naturall disposition and they bee reported to bee wise, lofty spirited, constant in friendship to one another, true in their promise, and more industrious than many others."—Wood's, "New England's Prospect," London, 1634.

passed away in prosperity; the Onondagas assumed an elevated rank for their wisdom and learning, among the other tribes, and there was not one of these which did not yield its assent to their superior privilege of lighting the council-fire.

But in the midst of the high tide of their prosperity, suddenly there arose a great alarm at the invasion of a ferocious band of warriors from the North of the Great Lakes; and as these bands advanced, an indiscriminate slaughter was made of men, women, and children. Destruction fell upon all alike.

The public alarm was great; and Hiawatha advised them not to waste their efforts in a desultory manner, but to call a council of all the tribes that could be gathered together, from the East to the West; and, at the same time, he appointed a meeting to take place on an eminence on the banks of the Onondaga Lake. There, accordingly, the chief men assembled, while the occasion brought together a vast multitude of men, women, and children, who were in expectation of some marvellous deliverance.

Three days elapsed, and Hiawatha did not appear. The multitude began to fear that he was not coming, and messengers were despatched for him to Tioto, who found him depressed with a presentiment that evil would follow his attendance. These fears were overruled by the eager persuasions of the messengers; and Hiawatha, taking his daughter with him, put his wonderful canoe in its element and set out for the council. The grand assemblage that was to avert the threatened danger appeared quickly in sight, as he moved rapidly along in his magic canoe; and when the people saw him, they sent up loud shouts of welcome until the venerated man

landed. A steep ascent led up the banks of the lake to the place occupied by the council; and, as he walked up, a loud whirring sound was heard above, as if caused by some rushing current of air. Instantly, the eyes of all were directed upward to the sky, where was seen a dark spot, something like a small cloud, descending rapidly, and as it approached, enlarging in its size and increasing in velocity. Terror and alarm filled the minds of the multitude and they scattered in confusion. But as soon as he had gained the eminence, Hiawatha stood still, causing his daughter to do the same—deeming it cowardly to fly, and impossible, if it was attempted, to divert the designs of the Great Spirit. The descending object now assumed a more definite aspect; and, as it came nearer, revealed the shape of a gigantic white bird, with wide-extended and pointed wings. This bird came down with ever increasing velocity, until, with a mighty swoop, it dropped upon the girl, crushing her at once to the earth.

The fixed face of Hiawatha alone indicated his consciousness of his daughter's death; while in silence he signalled to the warriors, who had stood watching the event in speechless consternation. One after the other stepped up to the prostrate bird, which was killed by its violent fall, and selecting a feather from its snow-white plumage, decorated himself therewith.*

But now a new affliction fell upon Hiawatha; for, on removing the carcass of the bird, not a trace could be discovered of his daughter. Her body had vanished from the earth. Shades of anguish contracted the dark face of Hiawatha. He stood apart in voiceless

* Since this event, say the Indians of this tribe, the plumage of the white heron has been used for their decorations on the war-path.

grief. No work was spoken. His people waited in silence, until at length arousing himself, he turned to them and walked in calm dignity to the head of the council.

The first day he listened with attentive gravity to the plans of the different speakers; on the next day he arose and said: "My friends and brothers; you are members of many tribes, and have come from a great distance. We have come to promote the common interest, and our mutual safety. How shall it be accomplished? To oppose these Northern hordes in tribes singly, while we are at variance often with each other, is impossible. By uniting in a common band of brotherhood we may hope to succeed. Let this be done, and we shall drive the enemy from our land. Listen to me by tribes. You, the Mohawks, who are sitting under the shadow of the great tree, whose branches spread wide around, and whose roots sink deep into the earth, shall be the first nation, because you are warlike and mighty. You, the Oneidas, who recline your bodies against the everlasting stone that cannot be moved, shall be the second nation, because you always give wise counsel. You, the Onondagas, who have your habitation at the foot of the great hills, and are overshadowed by their crags, shall be the third nation, because you are greatly gifted in speech. You, the Senecas, whose dwelling is in the dark forest, and whose home is all over the land, shall be the fourth nation, because of your superior cunning in hunting. And you, the Cayugas, the people who live in the open country and possess much wisdom, shall be the fifth nation, because you understand better the art of raising corn and beans, and making lodges. Unite, ye five nations, and have one common interest, and no foe shall

disturb and subdue you. You, the people who are the feeble bushes, and you who are a fishing people, may place yourselves under our protection, and we will defend you. And you of the South and West may do the same, and we will protect you. We earnestly desire the alliance and friendship of you all. Brothers, if we unite in this great bond, the Great Spirit will smile upon us, and we shall be free, prosperous, and happy; but if we remain as we are, we shall be subject to his frown. We shall be enslaved, ruined, perhaps annihilated. We may perish under the war-storm, and our names be no longer remembered by good men, nor be repeated in the dance and song. Brothers, those are the words of Hiawatha. I have spoken. I am done." *

The next day his plan of union was considered and adopted by the council, after which Hiawatha again addressed the people with wise words of counsel, and at the close of this speech bade them farewell; for he conceived that his mission to the Iroquois was accomplished, and he might announce his withdrawal to the skies. He then went down to the shore, and assumed his seat in his mystical canoe. Sweet music was heard in the air as he seated himself; and while the wondering multitude stood gazing at their beloved chief, he was silently wafted from sight, and they saw him no more. He passed to the Isle of the Blessed, inhabited by Owayneo † and his manitos.

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*Canassatego, a renowned chief of the Confederacy, in his remarkable piece of advice to the Colonial Commissioners of Lancaster in July, 1744, seems to imply that there was an error in this plan of Hiawatha, as it did not admit all nations into their Confederacy with equal rights.

†A name for their Great Spirit in the dialect of the Iroquois.

And they said, "Farewell forever!"
Said, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"
And the forests, dark and lonely,
Moved through all their depths of darkness,
Sighed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"
And the waves upon the margin,
Rising, rippling on the pebbles,
Sobbed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"
And the heron, the shuh-shu-gah,
From her haunts among the fen-lands,
Screamed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"
Thus departed Hiawatha,
Hiawatha the Beloved,
In the glory of the sunset,
In the purple mists of evening,
To the regions of the home-wind,
Of the northwest wind, Keewaydin,
To the Islands of the Blessed,
To the kingdom of Ponemah,
To the land of the Hereafter. *

* "The Song of Hiawatha," by H. W. Longfellow.

CHAPTER II

BEOWULF

OLD King Hrothgar built for himself a great palace, covered with gold, with benches all round outside, and a terrace leading up to it. It was bigger than any hall men had ever heard of, and there Hrothgar sat on his throne to share with men the good things God had given him. A band of brave knights gathered round him, all living together in peace and joy.

But there came a wicked monster, Grendel, out of the moors. He stole across the fens in the thick darkness, and touched the great iron bars of the door of the hall, which immediately sprang open. Then, with his eyes shooting out flame, he spied the knights sleeping after battle. With his steel finger nails the hideous fiend seized thirty of them in their sleep. He gave yells of joy, and sped as quick as lightning across the moors, to reach his home with his prey.

When the knights awoke, they raised a great cry of sorrow, whilst the aged King himself sat speechless with grief. None could do battle with the monster, he was too strong, too horrible for any one to conquer. For twelve long years Grendel warred against Hrothgar; like a dark shadow of death he prowled round about the hall, and lay in wait for his men on the misty moors. One thing he could not touch, and that was the King's sacred throne.

Now there lived in a far-off land a youngster called

Beowulf, who had the strength of thirty men. He heard of the wicked deeds of Grendel, and the sorrow of the good King Hrothgar. So he had made ready a strong ship, and with fourteen friends set sail to visit Hrothgar, as he was in need of help. The good ship flew over the swelling ocean like a bird, till in due time the voyagers saw shining white cliffs before them. Then they knew their journey was at an end; they made fast their ship, grasped their weapons, and thanked God that they had had an easy voyage.

Now the coastguard spied them from a tower. He set off to the shore, riding on horseback, and brandishing a huge lance.

"Who are you," he cried, "bearing arms and openly landing here? I am bound to know from whence you come before you make a step forward. Listen to my plain words, and hasten to answer me." Beowulf made answer that they came as friends, to rid Hrothgar of his wicked enemy Grendel, and at that the coastguard led them on to guide them to the King's palace. Downhill they ran together, with a rushing sound of voices and armed tread, until they saw the hall shining like gold against the sky. The guard bade them go straight to it, then, wheeling round on his horse, he said, "It is time for me to go. May the Father of All keep you in safety. For myself, I must guard the coast."

The street was paved with stone, and Beowulf's men marched along, following it to the hall, their armour shining in the sun and clanging as they went. They reached the terrace, where they set down their broad shields. Then they seated themselves on the bench, while they stacked their spears together and made themselves known to the herald.

Hrothgar speedily bade them welcome. They entered the great hall with measured tread, Beowulf leading the way. His armour shone like a golden net-work, and his look was high and noble, as he said, "Hail, O King! To fight against Grendel single-handed have I come. Grant me this, that I may have this task alone, I and my little band of men. I know that the terrible monster despises weapons, and therefore I shall bear neither sword, nor shield, nor buckler. Hand to hand I will fight the foe, and death shall come to whomsoever God wills. If death overtakes me, then will the monster carry away my body to the swamps, so care not for my body, but send my armour to my King. My fate is in God's hands."

Hrothgar loved the youth for his noble words, and bade him and his men sit down to the table and merrily share the feast, if they had a mind to do so. As they feasted, a minstrel sang with a clear voice. The Queen, in cloth of gold, moved down the hall and handed the jewelled cup of mead to the King and all the warriors, old and young. At the right moment, with gracious words, she brought it to Beowulf. Full of pride and high purpose, the youth drank from the splendid cup, and vowed that he would conquer the enemy or die.

When the sun sank in the west, all the guests arose. The King bade Beowulf guard the house, and watch for the foe. "Have courage," he said, "be watchful, resolve on success. Not a wish of yours shall be left unfulfilled, if you perform this mighty deed."

Then Beowulf lay down to rest in the hall, putting off from him his coat of mail, helmet, and sword.

Through the dim night Grendel came stealing. All slept in the darkness, all but one! The door sprang

open at the first touch that the monster gave it. He trod quickly over the paved floor of the hall; his eyes gleamed as he saw a troop of kinsmen lying together asleep. He laughed as he reckoned on sucking the life of each one before day broke. He seized a sleeping warrior, and in a trice had crunched his bones. Then he stretched out his hand to seize Beowulf on his bed. Quickly did Beowulf grip his arm; he stood up full length and grappled with him with all his might, till his fingers cracked as though they would burst. Never had Grendel felt such a grip; he had a mind to go, but could not. He roared, and the hall resounded with his yells, as up and down he raged, with Beowulf holding him in a fast embrace. The benches were overturned, the timbers of the hall cracked, the beautiful hall was all but wrecked. Beowulf's men had seized their weapons and thought to hack Grendel on every side, but no blade could touch him. Still Beowulf held him by the arm; his shoulder cracked, and he fled, wounded to death, leaving hand, arm, and shoulder in Beowulf's grasp. Over the moors, into the darkness, he sped as best he might, and to Beowulf was the victory.

Then, in the morning, many a warrior came from far and near. Riding in troops, they tracked the monster's path, where he had fled stricken to death. In a dismal pool he had yielded up his life.

Racing their horses over the green turf, they reached again the paved street. The golden roof of the palace glittered in the sunlight. The King stood on the terrace and gave thanks to God. "I have had much woe," he said, "but this lad, through God's might, has done the deed that we, with all our wisdom, could not do. Now I will heartily love you, Beowulf, as if you were my son.

You shall want for nothing in this world, and your fame shall live forever."

The palace was cleansed, the walls hung anew with cloth of gold, the whole place was made fair and straight, for only the roof had been left altogether unhurt after the fight.

A merry feast was held. The King brought forth out of his treasures a banner, helmet, and mail coat. These he gave to Beowolf; but more wonderful than all was a famous sword handed down to him through the ages. Then eight horses with golden cheekplates were brought within the court; one of them was saddled with King Hrothgar's own saddle, decorated with silver. Hrothgar gave all to Beowulf, bidding him enjoy them well. To each of Beowulf's men he gave rich gifts. The minstrels sang; the Queen, beautiful and gracious, bore the cup to the King and Beowulf. To Beowulf she, too, gave gifts: mantle and bracelets and collar of gold. "Use these gifts," she said, "and prosper well! As far as the sea rolls your name shall be known."

Great was the joy of all till evening came. Then the hall was cleared of benches and strewn with beds. Beowulf, like the King, had his own bower this night to sleep in. The nobles lay down in the hall, at their heads they set their shields and placed ready their helmets and their mail coats. Each slept, ready in an instant to do battle for his lord.

So they sank to rest, little dreaming what deep sorrow was to fall on them.

Hrothgar's men sank to rest, but death was to be the portion of one. Grendel the monster was dead, but Grendel's mother still lived. Furious at the death of her son, she crept to the great hall, and made her way in,

clutched an earl, the King's dearest friend, and crushed him in his sleep. Great was the uproar, though the terror was less than when Grendel came. The knights leapt up, sword in hand; the witch hurried to escape, she wanted to get out with her life.

The aged King felt bitter grief when he heard that his dearest friend was slain. He sent for Beowulf, who, like the King, had had his own sleeping bower that night. The youth stood before Hrothgar and hoped that all was well.

"Do not ask if things go well," said the sorrowing King, "we have fresh grief this morning. My dearest friend and noblest knight is slain. Grendel you yourself destroyed through the strength given you by God, but another monster has come to avenge his death. I have heard the country folk say that there were two huge fiends to be seen stalking over the moors, one like a woman, as near as they could make out, the other had the form of a man, but was huger far. It was he they called Grendel. These two haunt a fearful spot, a land of untrodden bogs and windy cliffs. A waterfall plunges into the blackness below, and twisted trees with gnarled roots overhang it. An unearthly fire is seen gleaming there night after night. None can tell the depth of the stream. Even a stag, hunted to death, will face his foes on the bank rather than plunge into those waters. It is a fearful spot. You are our only help, dare you enter this horrible haunt?"

Quick was Beowulf's answer: "Sorrow not, O King! Rouse yourself quickly, and let us track the monster. Each of us must look for death, and he who has the chance should do mighty deeds before it comes. I promise you Grendel's kin shall not escape me, if she hide in the depths of the earth or of the ocean."

The King sprang up gladly, and Beowulf and his friends set out. They passed stony banks and narrow gullies, the haunts of goblins.

Suddenly they saw a clump of gloomy trees, overhanging a dreary pool. A shudder ran throught them, for the pool was blood-red.

All sat down by the edge of the pool, while the horn sounded a cheerful blast. In the water were monstrous sea-snakes, and on jutting points of land were dragons and strange beasts: they tumbled away, full of rage, at the sound of the horn.

One of Beowulf's men took aim at a monster with his arrow, and pierced him through, so that he swam no more.

Beowulf was making ready for the fight. He covered his body with armour lest the fiend should clutch him. On his head was a white helmet, decorated with figures of boars worked in silver. No weapon could hurt it. His sword was a wonderful treasure, with an edge of iron; it had never failed any one who had needed it in battle.

"Be like a father to my men, if I perish," said Beowulf to Hrothgar, "and send the rich gifts you have given me to my King. He will see that I had good fortune while life lasted. Either I will win fame, or death shall take me."

He dashed away, plunging headlong into the pool. It took nearly the whole day before he reached the bottom, and while he was still on his way the water-witch met him. For a hundred years she had lived in those depths. She made a grab at him, and caught him in her talons, but his coat of mail saved him from her loathsome fingers. Still she clutched him tight, and bore him

in her arms to the bottom of the lake; he had no power to use his weapons, though he had courage enough. Water-beasts swam after him and battered him with their tusks.

Then he saw that he was in a vast hall, where there was no water, but a strange, unearthly glow of firelight. At once the fight began, but the sword would not bite—it failed its master in his need; for the first time its fame broke down. Away Beowulf threw it in anger, trusting to the strength of his hands. He cared nothing for his own life, for he thought but of honour.

He seized the witch by the shoulder and swayed her so that she sank on the pavement. Quickly she recovered, and closed in on him; he staggered and fell, worn out. She sat on him, and drew her knife to take his life, but his good mail coat turned the point. He stood up again, and then truly God helped him, for he saw among the armour on the wall an old sword of huge size, the handiwork of giants. He seized it, and smote with all his might, so that the witch gave up her life.

His heart was full of gladness, and light, calm and beautiful as that of the sun, filled the hall. He scanned the vast chamber, and saw Grendel lying there dead. He cut off his head as a trophy for King Hrothgar, whose men the fiend had killed and devoured.

Now those men who were seated on the banks of the pool watching with Hrothgar saw that the water was tinged with blood. Then the old men spoke together of the brave Beowulf, saying they feared they would never see him again. The day was waning fast, so they and the King went homeward. Beowulf's men stayed on, sick at heart, gazing at the pool. They longed, but did not expect, to see their lord and master.

Under the depths, Beowulf was making his way to them. The magic sword melted in his hand, like snow in sunshine; only the hilt remained, so venomous was the fiend that had been slain therewith. He brought nothing more with him than the hilt and Grendel's head. Up he rose through the waters where the furious sea-beasts before had chased him. Now not one was to be seen; the depths were purified when the witch lost her life. So he came to land, bravely swimming, bearing his spoils. His men saw him, they thanked God, and ran to free him of his armour. They rejoiced to get sight of him, sound and whole.

Now they marched gladly through the highways to the town. It took four of them to carry Grendel's head. On they went, all fourteen, their captain glorious in their midst. They entered the great hall, startling the King and Queen, as they sat at meat, with the fearful sight of Grendel's head.

Beowulf handed the magic hilt to Hrothgar, who saw that it was the work of giants of old. He spake to Beowulf, while all held their peace, praised him for his courrage, said that he would love him as his son, and bade him be a help to mankind, remembering not to glory in his own strength, for he held it from God, and death without more ado might subdue it altogether. "Many, many treasures," he said, "must pass from me to you to-morrow, but now rest and feast."

Gladly Beowulf sat down to the banquet, and well he liked the thought of the rest.

When day dawned, he bade the King farewell with noble words, promising to help him in time of need. Hrothgar with tears and embraces let him go, giving him fresh gifts of hoarded jewels. He wept, for he loved

Beowulf well, and knew he would never see him any more.

The coastguard saw the gallant warriors coming, bade them welcome, and led them to their ship. The wind whistled in the sails, and a pleasant humming sound was heard as the good ship sped on her way. So Beowulf returned home, having done mighty deeds and gained great honour.

In due time Beowulf himself became King, and well he governed the land for fifty years. Then trouble came.

A slave, fleeing from his master, stumbled by an evil chance into the den of a dragon. There he saw a dazzling hoard of gold, guarded by the dragon for three hundred winters. The treasure tempted him, and he carried off a tankard of gold to give to his master, to make peace with him.

The dragon had been sleeping, now he awoke, and sniffed the scent of an enemy along the rock. He hunted diligently over the ground; he wanted to find the man who had done the mischief in his sleep. In his rage he swung around the treasure mound, dashing into it now and again to seek the jewelled tankard. He found it hard to wait until evening came, when he meant to avenge with fire the loss of his treasure.

Presently the sun sank, and the dragon had his will. He set forth, burning all the cheerful homes of men: his rage was felt far and wide. Before dawn he shot back again to his dark home, trusting in his mound and in his craft to defend himself.

Now Beowulf heard that his own home had been burnt to the ground. It was a great grief to him, almost making him break out in a rage against Providence. His breast heaved with anger.

He meant to rid his country of the plague, and to fight the dragon single handed. He would have thought it shame to seek him with a large band, he who, as a lad, had killed Grendel and his kin. As he armed for the fray, many thoughts filled his mind; he remembered the days of his youth and manhood. "I fought many wars in my youth," he said, "and now that I am aged, and the keeper of my people, I will yet again seek the enemy and do famously."

He bade his men await him on the mountain-side. They were to see which of the two would come alive out of the tussle.

There the aged King beheld where a rocky archway stood, with a stream of fire gushing from it; no one could stand there and not be scorched. He gave a great shout, and the dragon answered with a hot breath of flame. Beowulf, with drawn sword, stood well up to his shield, when the burning dragon, curved like an arch, came headlong upon him. The shield saved him but little; he swung up the sword to smite the horrible monster, but its edge did not bite. Sparks flew around him on every side; he saw that the end of his days had come.

His men crept away to the woods to save their lives. One, and one only, Wiglaf by name, sped through the smoke and flame to help his lord.

"My Lord Beowulf!" he cried, "with all your might defend life, I will support you to the utmost."

The dragon came on in fury; in a trice the flames consumed Wiglaf's shield, but, nothing daunted, he stepped under the shelter of Beowulf's, as his own fell in ashes about him. The King remembered his strength of old, and he smote with his sword with such force that it stuck in the monster's head, while splinters flew all

around. His hand was so strong that, as men used to say, he broke any sword in using it, and was none the worse for it.

Now, for the third time, the dragon rushed upon him, and seized him by the neck with his poisonous fangs. Wiglaf, with no thought for himself, rushed forward, though he was scorched with the flames, and smote the dragon lower down than Beowulf had done. With such effect the sword entered the dragon's body that from that moment the fire began to cease.

The King, recovering his senses, drew his knife and ended the monster's life. So these two together destroyed the enemy of the people. To Beowulf that was the greatest moment of his life, when he saw his work completed.

The wound that the dragon had given him began to burn and swell, for the poison had entered it. He knew that the tale of his days was told. As he rested on a stone by the mound, he pondered thoughtfully, looking on the cunning work of the dwarfs of old, the stone arches on their rocky pillars. Wiglaf, with tender care, unloosed his helmet and brought him water, Beowulf discoursing the while: "Now I would gladly have given my armour to my son, had God granted me one. I have ruled this people fifty years, and no King has dared attack them. I have held my own with justice, and no friend has lost his life through me. Though I am sick with deadly wounds, I have comfort in this. Now go quickly, beloved Wiglaf, show me the ancient wealth that I have won for my people, the gold and brilliant gems, that I may then contentedly give up my life."

Quickly did Wiglaf enter the mound at the bidding of his master. On every side he saw gold and jewels and

choice vases, helmets and bracelets, and over head, a marvellous banner, all golden, gleaming with light, so that he could scan the surface of the floor and see the curious treasured hoards. He filled his lap full of golden cups and platters, and also took the brilliant banner.

He hastened to return with his spoils, wondering, with pain, if he should find his King still alive. He bore his treasures to him, laid them on the ground, and again sprinkled him with water. "I thank God," said the dying King, "that I have been permitted to win this treasure for my people; now they will have all that they need. But I cannot be any longer here. Bid my men make a lofty mound on the headland overlooking the sea, and there place my ashes. In time to come men shall call it Beowulf's Barrow, it shall tower aloft to guide sailors over the stormy seas."

The brave King took from his neck his golden collar, took his helmet and his coronet, and gave them to his true knight, Wiglaf. "Fate has swept all my kinsmen away," said he, "and now I must follow them."

That was his last word, as his soul departed from his bosom, to join the company of the just.

Of all Kings in the world, he was, said his men, the gentlest to his knights and the most desirous of honour.

CHAPTER III

CHILDE HORN

THERE dwelt once in Southland a King named Altof, who was rich, powerful, and gentle. His Queen was named Gotthild, and they had a young son called Horn. The rain never rained, the sun never shone upon a fairer boy; his skin was like roses and lilies, and as clear as glass; and he was as brave as he was handsome. At fifteen years old his like was not to be seen in all the kingdoms around. He had a band of play-fellows, twelve boys of noble birth, but not one of them could throw the ball so high as Horn. Out of the twelve, two were his special companions, and one of them, Athulf, was the best of the company, while the other, Figold, was altogether the worst.

It came to pass one summer morning that good King Altof was riding on the sea-shore with only two attendants, and he looked out to sea and saw fifteen ships lying in the offing. It was the heathen Vikings who had come from Northland, bent on plundering Christian lands. When these saw the three Norsemen, they swarmed on to shore like a pack of wolves, all armed and full of battle fury. They slew the King and his knights, and made themselves masters of the whole land.

Queen Gotthild wept much for her lord, and more for her son, Childe Horn, who could not now ascend his father's throne. She clad herself in mourning garments, the meanest she could find, and went to dwell in a cave,

where she prayed night and day for her son, that he might be preserved from the malice of his enemies, at whose mercy he and his comrades lay. At first they thought to have slain him, but one of their leaders was touched by his glorious beauty, and so he said to the boy, "Horn, you are a fair stripling and a bold, and when you come to years, you and your band here, you are like to prove too many for us, so I am going to put you all in a boat and let it drift out to sea—where may the gods preserve you, or else send you to the bottom; but, for all our sakes, you cannot remain here."

Then they led the boys down to the shore, placed them in a little skiff, and pushed it off from the land. All but Horn wrung their hands in fear. The waves rose high, and, as the boat was tossed up and down, the lads gave themselves up for lost, not knowing whither they were driven; but when the morning of the second day broke, Horn sprang up from where he sat in the forepart of the skiff, crying, "I hear the birds sing, and I see the grass growing green—we are at the land!" Then they sprang right gladly on shore, and Horn called after the boat as it floated away, "A good vogage to thee, little boat! May wind and wave speed thee back to Southland. Greet all who knew me, and chiefly the good Queen Gotthild, my mother. And tell the heathen King that some day he shall meet his death at my hand."

Then the boys went on till they came to a city, where reigned King Aylmer of Westland—whom God reward for his kindness to them. He asked them in mild words whence they came, "for in good sooth," said he, "never have I seen so well-favoured a company"; and Horn answered proudly, "We are of good Christian blood, and we come from Southland, which has just been raided by

pagans, who slew many of our people, and sent us adrift in a boat, to be the sport of the winds and waves. For a day and a night we have been at sea without a rudder; and now we have been cast upon your coast, you may enslave or slay us, if but, it please thee, show us mercy."

Then the good King asked, "What is your name, my child?" and the boy answered. "Horn, at your pleasure, my Lord King; and if you need a servant, I will serve you well and truly."

"Childe Horn," said the King, "you bear a mighty name for one so young and tender.

> "Over hills and valleys oft the horn has rung,
> In the royal palace long the horn has hung.
> So shall thy name, O Hornchild, through every land resound,
> And the fame of thy wondrous beauty in all the West be found."

So Horn found great favour with the King, and he put him in charge of Athelbrus, the house-steward, that he might teach him all knightly duties, and he spared no pains with him, nor yet with his companions; but well trained as they all were, Horn was far ahead of them both in stature and noble bearing. Even a stranger looking at him could guess his lofty birth, and the splendour of his marvellous beauty lit up all the palace; while he won all hearts, from the meanest grooms to the greatest of the court ladies.

Now the fairest thing in that lordly court was the King's only daughter, Riminild. Her mother was dead, and she was well-beloved of her father, as only children are. Not a word had she ever ventured to speak to Horn when she saw him among the other knights at the great feasts, but day and night she bore his image in her heart. One night she dreamed that he entered her apartments

(and she wondered much at his boldness), and in the morning she sent for Athelbrus, the house-steward, and bade him conduct Horn into her presence. But he went to Athulf, who was the pure minded and true one of Horn's two chosen companions, while Figold, the other, was a wolf in sheep's clothing, and said to him, "You shall go with me in Horn's stead to the Princess."

So he went, and she, not recognising him in the ill-lighted room, stretched out her hand to him, crying, "Oh, Horn, I have loved you long. Now plight me your troth."

But Athulf whispered to her, "Hold! I am not Horn. I am but his friend, Athulf, as unlike him as may well be. Horn's little finger is fairer than my whole body; and were he dead, or a thousand miles off, I would not play him false."

Then Riminild rose up in anger and glared upon the old steward, crying, "Athelbrus, you wicked man, out of my sight, or I shall hate you for evermore! All shame and ill befall you if you bring me not Childe Horn himself!"

"Lady and Princess," answered Athelbrus warily, "listen, and I will tell you why I brought Athulf. The King entrusted Horn to my care, and I dread his anger. Now be not angry with me, and I will fetch him forthwith."

Then he went away, but, instead of Horn, this time he called Figold, the deceiver, and said to him, "Come with me, instead of Horn, to the royal Princess. Do not betray yourself, lest we both suffer for it."

Willingly went the faithless one with him, but to Figold the maid held not out her hand—well she knew that he was false, and she drove him from her presence in rage

and fury. Athelbrus feared her anger, and said to himself, "To make my peace with her I must now send her the true Horn." He found him in the hall presenting the wine cup to the King, and whispered to him, "Horn, you are wanted in the Princess's apartments"; and when Horn heard this his hand holding the full goblet so trembled that the wine ran over the edge. He went straight into the presence of the royal maiden, and as he knelt before her his beauty seemed to light up the room.

"Fair befall thee and thy maidens, O Lady!" said he. "The house-steward has sent me hither to ask thy will."

Then Riminild stood up, her cheeks red as the dawn, and told him of her love; and Horn took counsel with himself how he should answer her.

"May God in heaven bless him whom thou weddest, whoever he may be," he said. "I am but a foundling, and the King's servant to boot—it would be against all rule and custom were he to wed me with thee."

When Riminild heard this her heart died within her, and she fell fainting on the floor; but Horn lifted her up, and advised her to request her father that he might now receive knighthood. "An then," said he, "I will win you by my brave deeds."

When she heard that, she recovered herself and said, "Take my ring here to Master Athelbrus, and bid him from me ask the King to make you a knight."

So Horn went and told all to Athelbrus, who sought the King forthwith, and said, "To-morrow is a festival; I counsel thee to admit Horn to knighthood." And the King was pleased, and said, "Good! Horn is well worthy of it. I will create him a knight to-morrow, and he himself shall confer it on his twelve companions."

The next day the newly knighted one went to Rimi-

nild's bower, and told her that now he was her own true knight, and must go forth to do brave deeds in her name, and she said she would trust him evermore, and she gave him a gold ring with her name graven on it, which would preserve him from all evil. "Let this remind thee of me early and late," she said, "and thou canst never fall by treachery." And then they kissed each other, and she closed the door behind him, with tears.

The other knights were feasting and shouting in the King's hall, but Horn went to the stable, armed from head to foot. He stroked his coal-black steed, then sprang upon his back and rode off, his armour ringing as he went. Down to the seashore he galloped, singing joyously and praying God soon to send him the chance to do some deed of knightly daring, and there he met a band of pagen marauders, who had just landed from their pirate-ship. Horn asked them civilly what they wanted there, and one of the pagans answered insolently, "To conquer the land and slay all that dwell in it, as we did to King Altof, whose son now serves a foreign lord."

Horn, on hearing this, drew his sword and struck off the fellow's head; then he thought of his dead father and of his mother in her lonely cave; he looked on his ring and thought of Riminild, and dashed among the pirates, laying about him right and left, till, I warrant you, there were few of them left to tell the tale. "This," he cried, "is but the foretaste of what will be when I return to my own land and avenge my father's death!"

Then he rode back to the palace and told the King how he had slain the invaders, and "Here," he said, "is the head of the leader, to requite thee, O King, for granting me knighthood."

The next day the King went a-hunting in the forest, and

the false Figold rode at his side, but Horn stayed at home. And Figold spoke to the King out of his wicked heart and said, "I warn thee, King Aylmer, Horn is plotting to dishonour thee—to rob thee of thy daughter and of thy kingdom to boot. He is even now plotting with her in her bower."

Then the King galloped home in a rage, and burst into Riminild's bower, and there, sure enough, he found Horn, as Figold had said. "Out of my land, base foundling!" he cried. "What have you to do with the young Queen here?"

And Horn departed without a word. He went to the stable, saddled his horse, then he girded on his sword and returned to the palace; he crossed the hall and entered Riminild's apartments for the last time. "Lady," he said, "I must go forth to strange lands for seven years; at the end of that time I will either return or send a messenger; but if I do neither, you may give yourself to another, nor wait longer for me. Now kiss me a long farewell."

Riminild promised to be true to him, and she took a gold ring from her finger, saying, "Wear this above the other which I gave you, or if you grow weary of them, fling them both away, and watch to see if its two stones change colour; for if I die, the one will turn pale, and if I am false, the other will turn red."

"Riminild," said Childe Horn, "I am yours for evermore! There is a pool of clear water under a tree in the garden—go there daily and look for my shadow in the water. If you see it not, know that I am unaltered; and if you see it, know that I no longer love thee."

Then they embraced and kissed each other, and Horn parted from her, and rode down to the coast, and took

passage on a ship bound for Ireland. When he landed there, two of its King's sons met him, and took him to their father, good King Thurstan, before whom Horn bowed low, and the King bade him welcome, and praised his beauty, and asked his name.

"My name is Good Courage," said Horn boldly, and the King was well pleased.

Now, at Christmas, King Thurstan made a great feast, and in the midst of it one rushed in crying, "Guests, O King! We are besieged by five heathen chiefs, and one of them proclaims himself ready to fight any three of our knights single handed to-morrow at sunrise."

"That would be but a sorry Christmas service," said King Thurstan; "who can advise me how best to answer them?" Then Horn spoke up from his seat at the table, "If these pagans are ready to fight, one against three, what may not a Christian dare? I will adventure myself against them all, and one after another they shall go down before my good sword."

Heavy of heart was King Thurstan that night, and little did he sleep. But "Sir Good Courage" rose early and buckled on his armour. Then he went to the King and said, "Now, Sir King, come with me to the field, and I will show you in what coin to pay the demands of these heathen." So they rode on together in the twilight, till they came to the green meadow, where a giant was waiting for them. Horn greeted him with a blow that brought him to the ground at once, and ran another giant through the heart with his sword; and when their followers saw that their leaders were slain, they turned and fled back to the shore, but Horn tried to cut them off from their ships, and in the scrimmage the King's two sons fell. At this Horn was sore grieved, and he fell upon

the pagans in fury, and slew them right and left, to avenge the King and himself.

Bitterly wept King Thurstan when his sons were brought home to him on their biers; there was great mourning for the young princes, who were buried with high honours in the vault under the church. Afterwards the King called his knights together and said to Horn, "Good Courage, but for you we were all dead men. I will make you my heir; you shall wed my daughter Swanhild, who is bright and beautiful as the sunshine, and shall reign here after me."

So Horn lived there for six years, always under the name of Good Courage, but he sent no messenger to Riminild, not wishing any man to know his secret, and consequently Riminild was in great sorrow on his account, not knowing whether he was true to her or not. Moreover, the King of a neighbouring country sought her hand in marriage, and her father now fixed a day for the wedding.

One morning, as Horn was riding to the forest, he saw a stranger standing in the wayside, who, on being questioned, said, "I come from Westland, and I seek the Knight Sir Horn. Riminild the maiden is in sore heaviness of spirit, bewailing herself day and night, for on Sunday next she is to be married to a King."

Then was Horn's grief as great as that of Riminild. His eyes overflowed with tears. He looked at his ring with its colored stones; the one had not turned red, but it seemed to him that the other was turning pale. "Well knew my heart that you would keep your troth with me, Riminild," said he to himself, "and that never would that stone grow red; but this paling one bodes ill. And you doubtless have often looked in the garden pool for

my shadow, and have seen naught there but your own lovely image. *That* shadow shall never come, O sweet love, Riminild, to prove to you that your love is false, but he himself shall come and drive all shadows away.

"And you, my trusty messenger," he said aloud, "go back to maid Riminild and tell her that she shall indeed wed a King next Sunday, for before the church bells ring for service I will be with her."

The Princess Riminild stood on the beach and looked out to sea, hoping to see Horn coming in his helmet and shield to deliver her; but none came, save her own messenger, who was washed up on the shore—drowned! And she wrung her hands in her anguish.

Horn had gone immediately to King Thurstan, and, after saluting him, told him his real name and his present trouble. "And now, O King," said he, "I pray you to reward me for all my services by helping me to get possession of Riminild. Your daughter, Swanhild, will I give to a man the best and faithfullest ever called to the ranks of knighthood."

Then said the King, "Horn, follow your own counsel"; then he sent for his knights, and many of them followed Horn, so that he had a thousand or more at his command. The wind favoured their course, and in a few hours the ships cast anchor on the shore of Westland. Horn left his forces in a wood while he went on to learn what was doing. Well did he know the way, and lightly did he leap over the stones. As he went he met a pilgrim, and asked him the latest news, who answered, "I come from a wedding feast—but the bride's true love is far away, and she only weeps. I could not stay to see her grief."

"May God help me!" said Horn: "but this is sorrowful news. Let us change garments, good pilgrim. I

must go to the feast, and once there I vow I will give them something by which to remember Horn!" He blackened his eyebrows, and took the pilgrim's hat and staff, and when he reached the gate of the palace, the porter was for turning him back, but Horn took him up and flung him over the bridge, and then went on to the hall where the feast was being held. He sat down among the lowest, on the beggar's bench, and glowered round from under his blackened eyebrows. At a distance he saw Riminild sitting like one in a dream; then she rose to pour out mead and wine for the knights and squires, and Horn cried out, "Fair Queen, if ye would have God's blessing, let the beggar's turn come next."

She set down the flagon of wine, and poured him out brown beer in a jug, saying: "There, drink that off at a draught, thou boldest of beggar men!" But he gave it to the beggars, his companions, saying "I am not come to drink jugs of beer, but goblets of wine. Fair Queen," he cried, "thou deemest me a beggar, but I am rather a fisherman, come to haul in my net, which I left seven years ago hanging from a fair hand here in Westland." Then was Riminild much troubled within herself, and she looked hard at Horn. She reached him the goblet and said, "Drink wine then, fisherman, and tell me who thou art."

He drank from the goblet, and then dropped into it the gold ring, and said, "Look, O Queen, at what thou findest in the goblet, and ask no more who I am." The Queen withdrew into her bower with her four maidens, and when she saw the gold ring that she had given to Horn, she was sore distressed, and cried out, "Childe Horn must be dead, for this is his ring."

She then sent one of her waiting-maids to command

the stranger to her presence, and Horn, all unrecognised, appeared before her. "Tell me, honest pilgrim, where thou gottest this ring?" she asked him.

"I took it," said he, "from the finger of a man whom I found lying sick unto death in a wood. Loudly he was bewailing himself and the lady of his heart, one Riminild, who should at this time have wedded him." As he spoke he drew his cap down over his eyes, which were full of tears.

Then Riminild cried, "Break, heart, in my bosom! Horn is no more—he who hath already caused thee so many tender pangs." She threw herself on her couch and called for a knife, to kill the bridegroom and herself.

Her maidens shrieked with fear, but Horn flung his arms around her and pressed her to his heart. Then he cast away hat and staff, and wiped the brown stain from his face, and stood up before his love in his own fair countenance, asking, "Dear love, Riminild, know thou me not now? Away with your grief and kiss me—I am Horn!—Horn, your true lover and born slave."

She gazed into his eyes. At first she could not believe that it was he, but at last she could doubt no longer; she fell upon his neck, and in the sweet greetings that followed were two sick hearts made whole.

"Horn, you miscreant! how could you play me such a trick?"

"Have patience, sweet love, maid Riminild, and I will tell you all. Now let me go and finish my work, and when it is done I will come and rest at your side."

So he left her, and went back to the forest, and Riminild sent for Athulf, who met her with a doleful countenance. "Athulf!" she cried, "rejoice with me! Horn has come—I tell you Horn is here!"

"Alas!" said Athulf, "that cannot be. Who hath brought thee such an idle tale? Day and night have I stood here watching for him, but he came not, and much I fear me the noble Horn is dead."

"I tell you he is living," she said—"aye, and more alive than ever. Go to the forest and find him—he is there with all his faithful followers."

Athulf made haste to the forest, still unbelieving, but soon his heart bounded for joy, for there rode Horn in his shining armour at the head of his troops. Athulf rode to his side, and they returned together to the city, where Riminild was watching them from her turret. And Horn pointed to her and cried to his company, "Knights, yonder is my bride—help me to win her!"

Then was there a fierce storming of the gate—the shock of it shook Riminild's tower—and Horn and his heroes burst, all unheralded, into the King's hall. Fierce and furious was the bridal dance that followed; the tumult of it rose up to Riminild, and she prayed, "God preserve my lover in this wild confusion!"

Right merrily danced her dancer, and all unscathed he flashed through the hall, thanks to his true love and God's care. King Aylmer and the bridegroom confronted him and the younger, the bridegroom King, asked him what he sought there. "I seek my bride," said he, "and if you do not give her up to me I will have your life."

"Better thou should have the bride than that," said the other; "though I would sooner be torn in pieces than give thee either." And he defended himself bravely, but it availed him naught. Horn struck off his head from his shoulders, so that it bounded across the hall. Then cried Horn to the other guests, "The dance is over!" after which he proclaimed a truce, and, throwing

himself down on a couch, spake thus to King Aylmer: "I was born in Southland, of a royal race. The pagan Vikings slew King Altof, my father, and put me out to sea with my twelve companions. You did train me for the order of knighthood, and I have dishonoured it by no unworthy deeds, though you did drive me from your kingdom, thinking I meant to disgrace you through your daughter. But that which you credited me with I never contemplated. Accept me then, O King, for your son-in-law. Yet will I not claim my bride till I have won back my kingdom of Southland. That will I accomplish quickly, with the help of my brave knights and such others as I pray you to lend me, leaving in pledge therefor the fairest jewel in my crown, until King Horn shall be able to place Queen Riminild beside him on his father's throne."

As he spoke Riminild entered, and Horn took her hand and led her to her father, and the young couple stood before the old King—a right royal pair. Then King Aylmer spoke jestingly, "Truly I once did chide a young knight in my wrath, but never King Horn, whom I now behold for the first time. Never would I have spoken roughly to King Horn, much less forbidden him to woo a Princess."

Then all the knights and lords came offering their good wishes to the happy pair; and the old house-steward, Athelbrus, would have bent the knee to his former pupil, but Horn took the old man in his arms and embraced him, thanking him for all the pains he had taken with his breeding.

Horn's twelve companions came also, and did him homage as their sovereign, and he rejoiced to see them all, but especially Athulf the brave and true. "Athulf,"

he told him, "thou hast helped me to win my bride here, now come with me to Southland and help me to make a home for her. And you, too, shall win a lady—I have already chosen her; her name is Swanhild, and she will look fair even beside Riminild." Then did Athulf rejoice, but Figold, the traitor, was ready to sink into the ground with shame and envy.

Then Horn returned to his ship, taking Athulf with him, but Figold he left behind. Truly it is ill knowing what to do with a traitor, whether you take him to the field or leave him at home.

On went the ship before a favouring wind; the voyage lasted but four days. Horn landed at midnight, and he and Athulf went inland together. On the way they came upon a noble-looking knight asleep under his shield, upon which a cross was painted, and Horn cried to him, "Awake, and tell us what they are doing here. Thou seemest to be a Christian, I trow, else would I have hewn thee in pieces with my sword!"

The good knight sprang up aghast, and said, "Against my will I am serving the heathen who rule here. I am keeping a place ready for Horn, the best loved of all heroes. Long I have wondered why he does not bestir himself to return and fight for his own. God give him power so to do till he slay every one of these miscreants. They put him out to sea, a tender boy, with his twelve playmates, one of whom was my only son, Athulf. Dearly he loved Horn, and was beloved by him. Could I but see them both once more, I should feel that I could die in peace."

"Then rejoice," they told him, "for Horn and Athulf are here!"

Joyfully did the old man greet the youths; he em-

braced his son and bent the knee to Horn, and all three rejoiced together.

"Where is your company?" asked the old knight. "I suppose you two have come to explore the land. Well, your mother still lives, and if she knew you to be living would be beside herself with joy."

"Blessed be the day that I and my men landed here," said Horn. "We will catch these heathen dogs, or else tame them. We will speak to them in our own language."

Then Horn blew his horn, so that all on board the ship heard it and came on shore. As the young birds long for the dawn, so Horn longed for the fight that should free his country from her enemies. From morning to night the battle raged, till all the heathen, young and old, were slain, and young King Horn himself slew the pirate King. Then he went to church, with all his people, and an anthem was sung to the glory of God, and Horn gave thanks aloud for the restoration of his kingdom, after which he sought the place where his mother dwelt. How his heart wept for joy when he saw her! He placed a crown on her head, and arrayed her in rich robes, and brought her up to the palace. "Thou art glad to have thy child again," he said to her in the joy of his heart, "but I will make thee gladder still by bringing thee home a daughter, one who will please thee well." And he thought of his love, Riminild, with whom, however, things were just then going very much amiss.

For as son as Horn had departed, the treacherous Figold had collected a great army of workmen and made them build him a tower in the sea, which could only be reached when the tide was out. Now about this time Horn had a dream, in which he saw Riminild on board

a ship at sea, which presently went to pieces, and she tried to swim ashore, steering with her lily-white hand, while Figold, the traitor, sought to stop her with the point of his sword. Then he awoke and cried, "Athulf, true friend, we must away across the sea. Unless we make all speed some evil will befall us." And in the midst of a storm they set sail.

In the meantime Figold had left his tower and appeared in the presence of King Aylmer. Cunningly, out of his false heart spoke the traitor, "King Aylmer, Horn has sent me word that he would have his bride handed over to my care. He has regained his crown and realm and would fain have her there to be his Queen."

"Very well," said the King, "let her go with thee."

But Riminild was much displeased at the thought of being put into the hands of Figold, whom in her soul she would not trust.

"Why comes not Horn for me himself?" she asked. "I know not the way to his kingdom either by land or by sea."

"But I know it," said Figold, "and I will soon bring thee thither, most beauteous queen." But his wicked smile made her uneasy at heart.

"If Horn could not come himself," she said, "why did he not send Athulf, his faithful friend?" But this question pleased the traitor so little that he gave her no answer.

Her father blessed her, and she set forth, wringing her white hands.

Meanwhile, Horn, sailing from the south, was driven in shore by a storm, and he beheld Figold's high tower, and asked who had built such an ugly thing. He thought he heard a low murmuring as his ship flew past it before

the wind, but knew not what it might be. Soon he saw the battlements of King Aylmer's palace rising in the distance; there Riminild should be, looking out for him, but all was bare and empty. It seemed to him as though a star were missing from heaven; and as he crossed the threshold the ill news was told him how Figold had carried off Riminild. Horn had no mind to linger with the King. "Come, Athulf, true friend," said he, "and help me to search for her." So they searched far and near, in vain, till at last Horn remembered that strange tower in the sea, and set sail for the lonely fortress where Figold had the fair princess in his evil keeping. "Now, my eleven companions, and you, too, Athulf," said he, "abide here while I go up alone with my horn. God hath shown me how to order this attempt."

He left his sword on the ship, and took only a fishing line with a long hook. Then round and round the tower he walked, and he blew a loud blast out into the raging storm, until a head appeared out of a hole in the wall of the tower—it was that wicked knave Figold's; and Horn cast his line, and hauled the writhing traitor clean out of the tower. He whirled round the sea wolf at the end of the line, and swung him over the water by the sheer force of his arm, so that he was cast over to Athulf in the ship; and sore afraid was the traitor when the true men on board seized him.

Then Horn took up his bugle once more and sounded it so loudly that at the first blast the door was uncovered; at the second he could enter the tower; the third was heard as he led Riminild forth. Lightly did he clasp her round the waist and swing her into his boat, and then pulled for the ship.

He brought Riminild on board his ship, and called to

his band, "Ho there, my trusty eleven! Our voyage is ended, and we will now go merrily home. And you, Athulf, my chosen and tried friend, shall now have your guerdon; I will bring you to your bride Swanhild, and Riminild and I will be wedded at the same time—the same wedding feast shall serve us both.

"And Riminild, my sweet pearl, whom I have rescued from the deep, not all that I have suffered on your account grieves me like the perfidy this false one wrought on you, my loving heart. Through him the goodly tale of my twelve followers is broken; now when they gather round the table, one seat will ever be empty. Must it ever be that no dozen of men can be got together but one will prove a traitor?"

Then he bade them "Set the traitor in the boat and let it drift out to sea, as we poor children were made to do aforetime. Let the waves bear away treachery as once they bore innocence—our ship will make better speed; and as for him, let him drift till he find a land where no traitors are."

CHAPTER IV

SIR GALAHAD

MY GOOD blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel:
They reel, they roll in changing lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall!
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall:
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine:
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
I hear a voice but none are there;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark.
A gentle sound, an awful light!
Three angels bear the Holy Grail:
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, spins from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.

I leave the plain, I climb the height;
No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odors haunt my dreams;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on! the prize is near."
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the Holy Grail.

CHAPTER V

RUSTEM AND SOHRAB

GIVE ear unto the combat of Sohrab against Rustem, though it be a tale replete with tears.

It came about that on a certain day Rustem arose from his couch, and his mind was filled with forebodings. He bethought him therefore to go out to the chase. So he saddled Rakush and made ready his quiver with arrows. Then he turned him unto the wilds that lie near Turan, even in the direction of the city of Samengan. And when he was come nigh unto it, he started a herd of asses and made sport among them till that he was weary of the hunt. Then he caught one and slew it and roasted it for his meal, and when he had eaten it and broken the bones for the marrow, he laid himself down to slumber, and Rakush cropped the pasture beside him.

Now while the hero was sleeping there passed by seven knights of Turan, and they beheld Rakush and coveted him. So they threw their cords at him to ensnare him. But Rakush, when he beheld their design, pawed the ground in anger, and fell upon them as he had fallen upon the lion. And of one man he bit off the head, and another he struck down under his hoofs, and he would have overcome them all, but they were too many. So they ensnared him and led him into the city, thinking in their hearts, "Verily a goodly capture have we made." But Rustem when he awoke from his slum-

bers was downcast and sore grieved when he saw not his steed, and he said unto himself:

"How can I stand against the Turks, and how can I traverse the desert alone?"

And his heart was full of trouble. Then he sought for the traces of the horse's hoofs, and followed them, and they led him even unto the gates of the city. Now when those within beheld Rustem, and that he came before them on foot, the King and the nobles came forth to greet him, and inquired of him how this was come about. Then Rustem told them how Rakush was vanished while he slumbered, and how he had followed his track even unto these gates. And he sware a great oath, and vowed that if his courser were not restored unto him many heads should quit their trunks. Then the King of Samengan, when he saw that Rustem was beside himself with anger, spoke words of soothing, and said that none of his people should do wrong unto the hero; and he begged him that he would enter into his house and abide with him until that search had been made, saying:

"Surely Rakush cannot be hid."

And Rustem was satisfied at these words, and cast suspicion from his spirit, and entered the house of the King, and feasted with him, and beguiled the hours with wine. And the King rejoiced in his guest, and encompassed him with sweet singers and all honour. And when the night was fallen the King himself led Rustem unto a couch perfumed with musk and roses, and he bade him slumber sweetly until the morning. And he declared to him yet again that all was well for him and for his steed.

Now when a portion of the night was spent, and the

star of morning stood high in the arch of heaven, the door of Rustem's chamber was opened, and a murmur of soft voices came in from the threshold. And there stepped within a slave bearing a lamp perfumed with amber, and a woman whose beauty was veiled came after her. And as she moved musk was scattered from her robes. And the women came nigh unto the bed of the hero heavy with wine and slumber. And he was amazed when he saw them. And when he had roused him somewhat he spake and said:

"Who are thou, and what is thy name and thy desire, and what seekest thou from me in the dark night?"

Then the Peri-faced answered him, saying, "I am Tahmineh, the daughter of the King of Samengan, the race of the leopard and the lion, and none of the princes of this earth are worthy of my hand, neither hath any man seen me unveiled. But my heart is torn with anguish, and my spirit is tossed with desire, for I have heard of thy deeds of prowess, and how thou fearest neither Deev nor lion, neither leopard nor crocodile, and how thy hand is swift to strike, and how thou didst venture alone into Mazinderan, and how wild asses are devoured of thee, and how the earth groaneth under the tread of thy feet, and how men perish at thy blows, and how even the eagle dareth not swoop down upon her prey when she beholdeth thy sword. These things and more have they told unto me, and mine eyes have yearned to look upon thy face. And now hath God brought thee within the gates of my father, and I am come to say unto thee that I am thine if thou wilt hear me, and if thou wilt not, none other will I espouse. And consider, O Pehliva, how that love has obscured mine understanding and withdrawn me from the bosom of discretion, yet perad-

venture God will grant unto me a son like to thee for strength and valour, to whom shall be given the empire of the world. And if thou wilt listen unto me, I will lead forth before thee Rakush thy steed, and I will place under thy feet the land of Samengan."

Now while this moon of beauty was yet speaking, Rustem regarded her. And he saw that she was fair, and that wisdom abode in her mind; and when he heard of Rakush, his spirit was decided within him, and he held that this adventure could not end save gloriously. So he sent a Mubid unto the King and demanded the hand of Tahmineh from her father. And the King, when he heard the news, was rejoiced, and gave his daughter unto the Pehliva, and they concluded an alliance according to custom and the rites. And all men, young and old, within the house and city of the King were glad at this alliance, and called down blessings upon Rustem.

Now Rustem, when he was alone with the Peri-faced, took from his arm an onyx that was known unto all the world. And he gave it to her, and said:

"Cherish this jewel, and if Heaven cause thee to give birth unto a daughter, fasten it within her locks, and it will shield her from evil; but if it be granted unto thee to bring forth a son, fasten it upon his arm, that he may wear it like his father. And he shall be strong as Keriman, of stature like unto Saum the son of Neriman, and of grace of speech like unto Zal, my father."

The Peri-faced, when she had heard these words, was glad in his presence. But when the day was passed there came in unto them the King her father, and he told Rustem how that tidings of Rakush were come unto his ears, and how that the courser would shortly be within the gates. And Rustem, when he heard it, was filled

with longing after his steed, and when he knew that he was come he hastened forth to caress him. And with his own hands he fastened the saddle, and gave thanks unto Ormuzd, who had restored his joy between his hands. Then he knew that the time to depart was come. And he opened his arms and took unto his heart Tahmineh the fair of face, and he bathed her cheek with his tears and covered her hair with kisses. Then he flung him upon Rakush, and the swift-footed bare him quickly from out of her sight. And Tahmineh was sorrowful exceedingly, and Rustem too was filled with thoughts as he turned him back unto Zaboulistan. And he pondered this adventure in his heart, but to no man did he speak of what he had seen or done.

Now when nine moons had run their course there was born unto Tahmineh a son in the likeness of his father, a babe whose mouth was filled with smiles, wherefore men called him Sohrab. And when he numbered but one month he was like unto a child of twelve, and when he numbered five years he was skilled in arms and all the arts of war, and when ten years were rolled above his head there was none in the land that could resist him in the games of strength. Then he came before his mother and spake words of daring. And he said:

"Since I am taller and stouter than my peers, teach unto me my race and lineage, and what I shall say when men ask me the name of my sire. But if thou refuse an answer unto my demands, I will strike thee out from the rolls of the living."

When Tahmineh beheld the ardour of her son, she smiled in her spirit because that his fire was like to that of his father. And she opened her mouth and said:

"Hear my words, O my son, and be glad in thine

heart, neither give way in thy spirit to anger. For thou art the offspring of Rustem, thou art descended from the seed of Saum and Zal, and Neriman was thy forefather. And since God made the world it hath held none like unto Rustem, thy sire."

Then she showed to him a letter written by the Pehliva, and gave to him the gold and jewels Rustem had sent at his birth. And she spake and said:

"Cherish these gifts with gratitude, for it is thy father who hath sent them. Yet remember, O my son, that thou close thy lips concerning these things; for Turan groaneth under the hand of Afrasiyab, and he is foe unto Rustem the glorious. If, therefore, he should learn of thee, he would seek to destroy the son for hatred of the sire. Moreover, O my boy, if Rustem learned that thou wert become a mountain of valour, perchance he would demand thee at my hands, and the sorrow of thy loss would crush the heart of thy mother."

But Sohrab replied, "Nought can be hidden upon earth for aye. To all men are known the deeds of Rustem, and since my birth be thus noble, wherefore hast thou kept it dark from me so long? I will go forth with an army of brave Turks and lead them unto Iran, I will cast Kai Kaous from off his throne, I will give to Rustem the crown of the Kaianides, and together we will subdue the land of Turan, and Afrasiyab shall be slain by my hands. Then will I mount the throne in his stead. But thou shalt be called Queen of Iran, for since Rustem is my father and I am his son no other kings shall rule in this world, for to us alone behoveth it to wear the crowns of might. And I pant in longing after the battlefield, and I desire that the world should behold my prowess. But a horse is needful unto me, a steed tall and strong of

power to bear me, for it beseemeth me not to go on foot before mine enemies."

Now Tahmineh, when she had heard the words of this boy, rejoiced in her soul at his courage. So she bade the guardians of the flocks lead out the horses before Sohrab her son. And they did as she had bidden, and Sohrab surveyed the steeds, and tested their strength like as his father had done before him of old, and he bowed them under his hand, and he could not be satisfied. And thus for many days did he seek a worthy steed. Then one came before him and told of a foal sprung from Rakush, the swift of foot. When Sohrab heard the tidings he smiled, and bade that the foal be led before him. And he tested it and found it to be strong. So he saddled it and sprang upon its back, and cried, saying:

"Now that I own a horse like thee, the world shall be made dark to many."

Then he made ready for war against Iran, and the nobles and warriors flocked around him. And when all was in order Sohrab came before his grandsire and craved his counsel and his aid to go forth into the land of Iran and seek out his father. And the King of Samengan, when he heard these wishes, deemed them to be just, and he opened the doors of his treasures without stint and gave unto Sohrab of his wealth, for he was filled with pleasure at this boy. And he invested Sohrab with all the honours of a King, and he bestowed on him all the marks of his good pleasure.

Meantime a certain man brought news unto Afrasiyab that Sohrab was making ready an army to fall upon Iran, and to cast Kai Kaous from off his throne. And he told Afrasiyab how the courage and valour of

Sohrab exceeded words. And Afrasiyab, when he heard this, hid not his contentment, and he called before him Human and Barman, the doughty. Then he bade them gather together an army and join the ranks of Sohrab, and he confided to them his secret purpose, but he enjoined them tell no man thereof. For he said:

"Into our hands hath it been given to settle the course of the world. For it is known unto me that Sohrab is sprung from Rustem the Pehliva, but from Rustem must it be hidden who it is that goeth out against him, then peradventure he will perish by the hands of this young lion, and Iran, devoid of Rustem, will fall a prey into my hands. Then we will subdue Sohrab also, and all the world will be ours. But if it be written that Sohrab fall under the hand of Tehemten, then the grief he shall endure when he shall learn that he hath slain his son will bring him to the grave for sorrow."

So spake Afrasiyab in his guile, and when he had done unveiling his black heart he bade the warriors depart unto Samengan. And they bare with them gifts of great price to pour before the face of Sohrab. And they bare also a letter filled with soft words. And in the letter Afrasiyab lauded Sohrab for his resolve, and told him how that if Iran be subdued the world would henceforth know peace, for upon his own head should he place the crown of the Kaianides; and Turan, Iran, and Samengan should be as one land.

When Sohrab had read this letter, and saw the gifts and the aid sent out to him, he rejoiced aloud, for he deemed that now none could withstand his might. So he caused the cymbals of departure to be clashed, and the army made them ready to go forth. Then Sohrab

led them into the land of Iran. And their track was marked by desolation and destruction, for they spared nothing that they passed. And they spread fire and dismay abroad, and they marched on unstayed until they came unto the White Castle, the fortress wherein Iran put its trust.

Now the guardian of the castle was named Hujir, and there lived with him Gustahem the grave, but he was grown old, and could aid no longer save with his counsels. And there abode also his daughter Gurdafrid, a warlike maid, firm in the saddle, and practised in the fight. Now when Hujir beheld from afar a dusky cloud of armed men he came forth to meet them. And Sohrab, when he saw him, drew his sword, and demanded his name, and bade him prepare to meet his end. And he taunted him with rashness that he was come forth thus unaided to stand against a lion. But Hujir answered Sohrab with taunts again, and vowed that he would sever his head from his trunk and send it for a trophy unto the Shah. Yet Sohrab only smiled when he heard these words, and he challenged Hujir to come near. And they met in combat, and wrestled sore one with another, and stalwart were their strokes and strong; but Sohrab overcame Hujir as though he were an infant, and he bound him and sent him captive unto Human.

But when those within the castle learned that their chief was bound they raised great lamentation, and their fears were sore. And Gurdafrid, too, when she learned it, was grieved, but she was ashamed also for the fate of Hujir. So she took forth burnished mail and clad herself therein, and she hid her tresses under a helmet of Roum, and she mounted a steed of battle and came forth before the walls like to a warrior. And

she uttered a cry of thunder, and flung it amid the ranks of Turan, and she defied the champions to come forth to single combat. And none came, for they beheld her how she was strong, and they knew not that it was a woman, and they were afraid. But Sohrab, when he saw it, stepped forth and said:

"I will accept thy challenge, and a second prize will fall into my hands."

Then he girded himself and made ready for the fight. And the maid, when she saw he was ready, rained arrows upon him with art, and they fell quick like hail, and whizzed about his head; and Sohrab, when he saw it, could not defend himself, and was angry and ashamed. Then he covered his head with his shield and ran at the maid. But she, when she saw him approach, dropped her bow and couched a lance, and thrust at Sohrab with vigour, and shook him mightily, and it wanted little and she would have thrown him from his seat. And Sohrab was amazed, and his wrath knew no bounds. Then he ran at Gurdafrid with fury, and seized the reins of her steed, and caught her by the waist, and tore her armour, and threw her upon the ground. Yet ere he could raise his hand to strike her, she drew her sword and shivered his lance in twain, and leaped again upon her steed. And when she saw that the day was hers, she was weary of further combat, and she sped back unto the fortress. But Sohrab gave rein unto his horse, and followed after her in his great anger. And he caught her, and seized her, and tore the helmet off her head, for he desired to look upon the face of the man who could withstand the son of Rustem. And lo! when he had done so, there rolled forth from the helmet coils of dusky hue, and Sohrab beheld it was a woman that had overcome him in the

fight. And he was confounded. But when he had found speech he said:

"If the daughters of Iran are like to thee, and go forth unto battle, none can stand against this land."

Then he took his cord and threw it about her, and bound her in its snare, saying:

"Seek not to escape me, O moon of beauty, for never hath prey like unto thee fallen between my hands."

Then Gurdafrid, full of wile, turned unto him her face that was unveiled, for she beheld no other means of safety, and she said unto him:

"O hero without flaw, is it well that thou shouldest seek to make me captive, and show me unto the army? For they have beheld our combat, and that I overcame thee, and surely now they will gibe when they learn that thy strength was withstood by a woman. Better would it beseem thee to hide this adventure, lest thy cheeks have cause to blush because of me. Therefore let us conclude a peace together. The castle shall be thine, and all it holds; follow after me then, and take possession of thine own."

Now Sohrab, when he had listened, was beguiled by her words and her beauty, and he said:

"Thou dost wisely to make peace with me, for verily these walls could not resist my might."

And he followed after her unto the heights of the castle, and he stood with her before its gates. And Gustahem, when he saw them, opened the portal, and Gurdafrid stepped within the threshold, but when Sohrab would have followed after her she shut the door upon him. Then Sohrab saw that she had befooled him, and his fury knew no bounds. But ere he was recovered from his surprise she came out upon the battlements and

scoffed at him, and counselled him to go back whence he was come; for surely, since he could not stand against a woman, he would fall an easy prey before Rustem, when the Pehliva should have learned that robbers from Turan were broken into the land. And Sohrab was made yet madder for her words, and he departed from the walls in his wrath, and rode far in his anger, and spread terror in his path. And he vowed that he would yet bring the maid into subjection.

In the meantime Gustahem the aged called before him a scribe, and bade him write unto Kai Kaous all that was come about, and how an army was come forth from Turan, at whose head rode a chief that was a child in years, a lion in strength and stature. And he told how Hujir had been bound, and how the fortress was like to fall into the hands of the enemy; for there were none to defend it save only his daughter and himself and he craved the Shah to come to their aid.

Albeit when the day had followed yet again upon the night, Sohrab made ready his host to fall upon the castle. But when he came near thereto he found it was empty, and the doors thereof stood open, and no warriors appeared upon its walls. And he was surprised, for he knew not that in the darkness the inmates were fled by a passage that was hidden under the earth. And he searched the building for Gurdafrid, for his heart yearned after her in love and he cried aloud:

"Woe, woe is me that this moon is vanished behind the clouds!"

Now when Kai Kaous had gotten the writing of Gustahem, he was sore afflicted and much afraid, and he called about him his nobles and asked their counsels. And he said:

"Who shall stand against this Turk? For Gustahem doth liken him in power unto Rustem, and saith he resembleth the seed of Neriman."

Then the warriors cried with one accord, "Unto Rustem alone can we look in this danger!"

And Kai Kaous hearkened to their voice, and he called for a scribe and dictated unto him a letter. And he wrote unto his Pehliva, and invoked the blessings of Heaven upon his head, and he told him all that was come to pass, and how new dangers threatened Iran, and how to Rustem alone could he look for help in his trouble. And he recalled unto Tehemten all that he had done for him in the days that were gone by, and he entreated him once again to be his refuge. And he said:

"When thou shalt receive this letter, stay not to speak the word that hangeth upon thy lips; and if thou bearest roses in thy hands, stop not to smell them, but haste thee to help us in our need."

Then Kai Kaous sent forth Gew with this writing unto Zaboulistan, and bade him neither rest nor tarry until he should stand before the face of Rustem. And he said—

"When thou hast done my behest, turn thee again unto me; neither abide within the courts of the Pehliva, nor linger by the roadside."

And Gew did as the Shah commanded, and took neither food nor rest till he set foot within the gates of Rustem. And Rustem greeted him kindly, and asked him of his mission; and when he had read the writing of the Shah, he questioned Gew concerning Sohrab. For he said:

"I should not marvel if such an hero arose in Iran, but that a warrior of renown should come forth from amid the Turks, I cannot believe it. But thou sayest none

knoweth whence cometh this knight. I have myself a son in Samengan, but he is yet an infant, and his mother writeth to me that he rejoiceth in the sports of his age, and though he be like to become a hero among men, his time is not yet come to lead forth an army. And that which thou sayest hath been done; surely it is not the work of a babe. But enter, I pray thee, into my house, and we will confer together concerning this adventure."

Then Rustem bade his cooks make ready a banquet, and he feasted Gew, and troubled his head with wine, and caused him to forget cares and time. But when morn was come Gew remembered the commands of the Shah that he tarry not, but return with all speed, and he spake thereof to Rustem, and prayed him to make known his resolve. But Rustem spake, saying :

"Disquiet not thyself, for death will surely fall upon these men of Turan. Stay with me yet another day and rest, and water thy lips that are parched. For though this Sohrab be a hero like to Saum and Zal and Neriman, verily he shall fall by my hands."

And he made ready yet another banquet, and three days they caroused without ceasing. But on the fourth Gew uprose with resolve, and came before Rustem girt for departure. And he said :

"It behoveth me to return, O Pehliva, for I bethink me how Kai Kaous is a man hard and choleric, and the fear of Sohrab weigheth upon his heart, and his soul burneth with impatience, and he hath lost sleep, and hath hunger and thirst on this account. And he will be wroth against us if we delay yet longer to do his behest."

Then Rustem said, "Fear not, for none on earth dare be angered with me."

But he did as Gew desired, and made ready his army,

and saddled Rakush, and set forth from Zaboulistan, and a great train followed after him.

Now when they came nigh unto the courts of the Shah, the nobles came forth to meet them, and do homage before Rustem. And when they were come in, Rustem gat him from Rakush and hastened into the presence of his lord. But Kai Kaous, when he beheld him, was angry, and spake not, and his brows brows were knit with fury; and when Rustem had done obeisance before him, he unlocked the doors of his mouth, and words of folly escaped his lips. And he said:

"Who is Rustem, that he defieth my power and disregardeth my commands? If I had a sword within my grasp I would spilt his head like to an orange. Seize him, I command, and hang him upon the nearest gallows, and let his name be never spoken in my presence."

When he heard these words Gew trembled in his heart, but he said, "Dost thou set forth thy hand against Rustem?"

And the Shah when he heard it was beside himself, and he cried with a loud voice that Gew be hanged together with the other; and he bade Tus lead them forth. And Tus would have led them out, for he hoped the anger of the Shah would be appeased; but Rustem broke from his grasp and stood before Kai Kaous, and all the nobles were filled with fear when they saw his anger. And he flung reproaches at Kai Kaous, and he recalled to him his follies, and the march into Mazinderan and Hamaveran, and his flight into Heaven; and he reminded him how that but for Rustem he would not now be seated upon the throne of light. And he bade him threaten Sohrab the Turk with his gallows, and he said:

"I am a free man and no slave, and am servant alone

unto God; and without Rustem Kai Kaous is as nothing, And the world is subject unto me, and Rakush is my throne, and my sword is my seal, and my helmet my crown. And but for me, who called forth Kai Kobad, thine eyes had never looked upon this throne. And had I desired it I could have sat upon its seat. But now am I weary of thy follies, and I will turn me away from Iran, and when this Turk shall have put you under his yoke I shall not learn thereof."

Then he turned him and strode from out the presence-chamber. And he sprang upon Rakush, who waited without, and he was vanished from before their eyes ere yet the nobles had rallied from their astonishment. And they were downcast and oppressed with boding cares, and they held counsel among themselves what to do; for Rustem was their mainstay, and they knew that, bereft of his arm and counsel, they could not stand against this Turk. And they blamed Kai Kaous, and counted over the good deeds that Rustem had done for him, and they pondered and spake long. And in the end they resolved to send a messenger unto Kai Kaous, and they chose from their midst Gudarz the aged, and bade him stand before the Shah. And Gudarz did as they desired, and he spake long and without fear, and he counted over each deed that had been done by Rustem; and he reproached the Shah with his ingratitude, and he said how Rustem was the shepherd, and how the flock could not be led without its leader. And Kai Kaous heard him unto the end, and he knew that his words were the words of reason and truth, and he was ashamed of that which he had done, and confounded when he beheld his acts thus naked before him. And he humbled himself before Gudarz, and said:

"That which thou sayest, surely it is right."

And he entreated Gudarz to go forth and seek Rustem, and bid him forget the evil words of his Shah, and bring him back to the succor of Iran. And Gudarz hastened forth to do as Kai Kaous desired, and he told the nobles of his mission, and they joined themselves unto him, and all the chiefs of Iran went forth in quest of Rustem. And when they had found him, they prostrated themselves into the dust before him, and Gudarz told him of his mission, and he prayed him to remember that Kai Kaous was a man devoid of understanding, whose thoughts flowed over like to new wine that fermenteth. And he said:

"Though Rustem be angered against the King, yet hath the land of Iran done no wrong that it should perish at his hands. Yet, if Rustem save it not, surely it will fall under this Turk."

But Rustem said, "My patience hath an end, and I fear none but God. What is this Kai Kaous that he should anger me? and what am I that I have need of him? I have not deserved the evil words that he spake unto me, but now will I think of them no longer, but cast aside all thoughts of Iran."

When the nobles heard these words they grew pale, and fear took hold on their hearts. But Gudarz, full of wisdom, opened his mouth, and said:

"O Pehliva! the land, when it shall learn of this, will deem that Rustem is fled before the face of this Turk; and when men shall believe that Tehemten is afraid, they will cease to combat, and Iran will be downtrodden at his hands. Turn thee not, therefore, at this hour from thy allegiance to the Shah, and tarnish not thy glory by this retreat, neither suffer that the downfall of Iran

rest upon thy head. Put from thee, therefore, the words that Kai Kaous spake in his empty anger, and lead us forth to battle against this Turk. For it must not be spoken that Rustem feared to fight a beardless boy."

And Rustem listened, and pondered these words in his heart, and knew that they were good. But he said:

"Fear hath never been known of me, neither hath Rustem shunned the din of arms, and I depart not because of Sohrab, but because that scorn and insult have been my recompense."

Yet when he had pondered a while longer, he saw that he must return unto the Shah. So he did that which he knew to be right, and he rode till he came unto the gates of Kai Kaous, and he strode with a proud step into his presence.

Now when the Shah beheld Rustem from afar, he stepped down from off his throne and came before Pehliva, and craved his pardon for that which was come about. And he said how he had been angered because Rustem had tarried in his coming, and how haste was his birthright, and how he had forgotten himself in his vexation. But now was his mouth filled with the dust of repentance. And Rustem said:

"The world is the Shah's, and it behoveth thee to do as beseemeth thee best with thy servants. And until old age shall my loins be girt in fealty unto thee. And may power and majesty be thine for ever!"

And Kai Kaous answered and said, "O my Pehliva, may thy days be blessed unto the end!"

Then he invited him to feast with him, and they drank wine till far into the night, and held counsel together how they should act; and slaves poured rich gifts before

Rustem, and the nobles rejoiced, and all was well again within the gates of the King.

Then when the sun had risen and clothed the world with love, the clarions of war were sounded throughout the city, and men made them ready to go forth in enmity before the Turks. And the legions of Persia came forth at the behest of their Shah, and their countless thousands hid the earth under their feet, and the air was darkened by their spears. And when they were come unto the plains where stood the fortress of Hujir, they set up their tents as was their manner. So the watchman saw them from the battlements, and he set up a great cry. And Sohrab heard the cry, and questioned the man wherefore he shouted; and when he learned that the enemy were come, he rejoiced, and demanded a cup of wine, and drank to their destruction. Then he called forth Human and showed him the army, and bade him be of good cheer, for he said that he saw within its ranks no hero of mighty mace who could stand against himself. So he bade his warriors to a banquet of wine, and he said that they would feast until the time was come to meet their foes in battle. And they did as Sohrab said.

Now when night had thrown her mantle over the earth, Rustem came before the Shah and craved that he would suffer him to go forth beyond the camp that he might see what manner of man was this stripling. And Kai Kaous granted his request, and said that it was worthy a Pehliva of renown. Then Rustem went forth disguised in the garb of a Turk, and he entered the castle in secret, and he came within the chamber where Sohrab held his feast. Now when he had looked upon the boy he saw that he was like to a tall cypress of good sap, and that his arms were sinewy and strong like to the flanks of a camel,

and that his stature was that of a hero. And he saw that round about him stood brave warriors. And slaves with golden bugles poured wine before them, and they were all glad, neither did they dream of sorrow. Then it came about that while Rustem regarded them, Zindeh changed his seat and came nigh unto the spot where Rustem was watching. Now Zindeh was brother unto Tahmineh, and she had sent him forth with her son that he might point out to him his father, whom he alone knew of all the army, and she did it that harm might not befall if the heroes should meet in battle. Now Zindeh, when he had changed his seat, thought that he espied a watcher, and he strode toward the place where Rustem was hid, and he came before him and said—

"Who art thou? Come forth into the light that I may behold thy face."

But ere he could speak further, Rustem had lifted up his hand and struck him, and laid him dead upon the ground.

Now Sohrab, when he saw that Zindeh was gone out, was disquieted, and he asked of his slaves wherefore the hero returned not unto the banquet. So they went forth to seek him, and when they had found him in his blood, they came and told Sohrab what they had seen. But Sohrab would not believe it; so he ran to the spot and bade them bring torches, and all the warriors and singing girls followed after him. Then when Sohrab saw that it was true he was sore grieved; but he suffered not that the banquet be ended, for he would not that the spirits of his men be damped with pity. So they went back yet again to the feast.

Meanwhile Rustem returned him to the camp, and as he would have entered the lines he encountered Gew,

who went around to see that all was safe. And Gew, when he saw a tall man clad in the garb of a Turk, drew his sword and held himself ready for combat. But Rustem smiled and opened his mouth, and Gew knew his voice, and came to him and questioned him what he did without in the darkness. And Rustem told him. Then he went before Kai Kaous also and related what he had seen, and how no man like unto Sohrab was yet come forth from amid the Turks. And he likened him unto Saum, the son of Neriman.

Now when the morning was come, Sohrab put on his armour. Then he went unto a height whence he could look down over the camp of the Iranians. And he took with him Hujir, and spake to him, saying:

"Seek not to deceive me, nor swerve from the paths of truth. For if thou reply unto my questions with sincerity, I will loosen thy bonds and give thee treasures; but if thou deceive me, thou shalt languish till death in thy chains."

And Hujir said, "I will give answer unto thee according to my knowledge."

Then Sohrab said, "I am about to question thee concerning the nobles whose camps are spread beneath our feet, and thou shalt name unto me those whom I point out. Behold yon tent of gold brocade, adorned with skins of leopard, before whose doors stand an hundred elephants of war. Within its gates is a throne of turquoise, and over it floateth a standard of violet with a moon and sun worked in its centre. Tell unto me now whose is this pavilion that standeth thus in the midst of the whole camp?"

And Hujir replied, "It pertaineth unto the Shah of Iran."

Then Sohrab said, "I behold on its right hand yet

another tent draped in the colours of mourning, and above it floateth a standard whereon is worked an elephant."

And Hujir said, "It is the tent of Tus, the son of Nuder, for he beareth an elephant as his ensign."

Then Sohrab said, "Whose is the camp in which stand many warriors clad in rich armour?" A flag of gold with a lion worked upon it waveth along its field."

And Hujir said, "It belongeth unto Gudarz the brave. And those who stand about it are his sons, for eighty men of might are sprung from his loins."

Then Sohrab said, "To whom belongeth the tent draped with green tissues? Before its doors is planted the flag of Kawah. I see upon its throne a Pehliva, nobler of mien than all his fellows, whose head striketh the stars. And beside him standeth a steed tall as he, and his standard showeth a lion and a writhing dragon."

When Hujir heard this question he thought within himself, "If I tell unto this lion the signs whereby he may know Rustem the Pehliva, surely he will fall upon him and seek to destroy him. It will beseem me better, therefore, to keep silent, and to omit his name from the list of the heroes." So he said unto Sohrab:

"This is some ally who is come unto Kai Kaous from far Cathay, and his name is not known unto me."

And Sohrab when he heard it was downcast, and his heart was sad that he could nowhere discover Rustem; and though it seemed unto him that he beheld the marks whereby his mother said that he would know him, he could not credit the words of his eyes against the words of Hujir. Still he asked yet again the name of the warrior, and yet again Hujir denied it unto him, for it was written that that should come to pass which had been decreed.

But Sohrab ceased not from his questionings. And he asked:

"Who dwelleth beneath the standard with the head of a wolf?"

And Hujir said, "It is Gew, the son of Gudarz, who dwelleth within that tent, and men call him Gew the valiant."

Then Sohrab said, "Whose is the seat over which are raised awnings and brocades of Roum, that glisten with gold in the sunlight?"

And Hujir said, "It is the throne of Fraburz, the son of the Shah."

Then Sohrab said, "It beseemeth the son of a Shah to surround himself with such splendour."

And he pointed unto a tent with trappings of yellow that was encircled by flags of many colours. And he questioned of its owner.

And Hujir said, "Guraz the lion-hearted is master therein."

Then Sohrab, when he could not learn the tent of his father, questioned Hujir concerning Rustem, and he asked yet a third time of the green tent. Yet Hujir ever replied that he knew not the name of its master. And when Sohrab pressed him concerning Rustem, he said that Rustem lingered in Zaboulistan, for it was the feast of roses. But Sohrab refused to give ear unto the thought that Kai Kaous should go forth to battle without the aid of Rustem, whose might none could match. So he said unto Hujir:

"And thou show not unto me the tents of Rustem, I will strike thy head from off thy shoulders, and the world shall fade before thine eyes. Choose, therefore, the truth or thy life."

And Hujir thought within himself, "Though five score men cannot withstand Rustem when he be roused to battle-fury, my mind misgiveth me that he may have found his equal in this boy. And, for that the stripling is younger, it might come about that he subdue the Pehliva. What recketh my life against the weal of Iran? I will therefore abandon me into his hands rather than show unto him the marks of Rustem the Pehliva. So he said:

"Why seekest thou to know Rustem the Pehliva? Surely thou wilt know him in battle, and he shall strike thee dumb, and quell thy pride of youth. Yet I will not show him unto thee."

When Sohrab heard these words he raised his sword and smote Hujir, and made an end of him with a great blow. Then he made himself ready for fight, and leaped upon his steed of battle, and he rode till he came unto the camp of the Iranians, and he broke down the barriers with his spear, and fear seized upon all men when they beheld his stalwart form and majesty of mien and action. Then Sohrab opened his mouth, and his voice of thunder was heard even unto the far ends of the camp. And he spake words of pride, and called forth the Shah to do battle with him, and he sware with a loud voice that the blood of Zindeh should be avenged. Now when Sohrab's voice had run throughout the camp, confusion spread within its borders, and none of those who stood about the throne would accept his challenge for the Shah. And with one accord they said that Rustem was their sole support, and that his sword alone could cause the sun to weep. And Tus sped him within the courts of Rustem. And Rustem said:

"The hardest tasks doth Kai Kaous ever lay upon me."

But the nobles would not suffer him to linger, neither to waste time in words, and they buckled upon him his armour, and they threw his leopard-skin about him, and they saddled Rakush, and made ready the hero for the strife. And they pushed him forth, and called after him:

"Haste, haste, for no common combat awaiteth thee, for verily Ahriman standeth before us."

Now when Rustem was come before Sohrab, and beheld the youth, brave and strong, with a breast like unto Saum, he said to him:

"Let us go apart from hence, and step forth from out the lines of the armies."

For there was a zone between the camps that none might pass. And Sohrab assented to the demand of Rustem, and they stepped out into it, and made them ready for single combat. But when Sohrab would have fallen upon him, the soul of Rustem melted with compassion, and he desired to save a boy thus fair and valiant. So he said unto him:

"O young man, the air is warm and soft, but the earth is cold. I have pity upon thee, and would not take from thee the boon of life. Yet if we combat together, surely thou wilt fall by my hands, for none have withstood my power, neither men nor Deevs nor dragons. Desist, therefore, from this enterprise, and quit the ranks of Turan, for Iran hath need of heroes like unto thee."

Now while Rustem spake thus, the heart of Sohrab went out to him. And he looked at him wistfully, and said:

"O hero, I am about to put unto thee a question, and I entreat of thee that thou reply to me according to the truth. Tell unto me thy name, that my heart may rejoice in thy words, for it seemeth unto me that thou art

none other than Rustem, the son of Zal, the son of Saum, the son of Neriman."

But Rustem replied, "Thou errest, I am not Rustem, neither am I sprung from the race of Neriman. Rustem is a Pehliva, but I, I am a slave, and own neither a crown nor a throne."

These words spake Rustem that Sohrab might be afraid when he beheld his prowess, and deem that yet greater might was hidden in the camp of his enemy. But Sohrab when he heard these words was sad, and his hopes that were risen so high were shattered, and the day that had looked so bright was made dark unto his eyes. Then he made him ready for the combat, and they fought until their spears were shivered and their swords hacked like unto saws. And when all their weapons were bent, they betook them into clubs, and they waged war with these until they were broken. Then they strove until their mail was torn and their horses spent with exhaustion, and even then they could not desist, but wrestled with one another with their hands till that the sweat and blood ran down from their bodies. And they contended until their throats were parched and their bodies weary, and to neither was given the victory. They stayed them a while to rest, and Rustem thought within his mind how all his days he had not coped with such a hero. And it seemed to him that his contest with the White Deev had been as nought to this.

Now when they had rested a while they fell to again, and they fought with arrows, but still none could surpass the other. Then Rustem strove to hurl Sohrab from his steed, but it availed him naught, and he could shake him no more than the mountain can be moved from its seat. So they betook themselves again unto clubs, and

Sohrab aimed at Rustem with might and smote him, and Rustem reeled beneath the stroke, and bit his lips in agony. Then Sohrab vaunted his advantage, and bade Rustem go and measure him with his equals; for though his strength be great, he could not stand against a youth. So they went their ways, and Rustem fell upon the men of Turan, and spread confusion far and wide among their ranks; and Sohrab raged along the lines of Iran, and men and horses fell under his hands. And Rustem was sad in his soul, and he turned with sorrow into his camp. But when he saw the destruction Sohrab had wrought his anger was kindled, and he reproached the youth, and challenged him to come forth yet again to single combat. But because that the day was far spent they resolved to rest until the morrow.

Then Rustem went before Kai Kaous and told him of this boy of valour, and he prayed unto Ormuzd that He would give him strength to vanquish his foe. Yet he made ready also his house lest he should fall in the fight, and he commanded that a tender message be borne unto Rudabeh, and he sent words of comfort unto Zal, his father. And Sohrab, too, in his camp lauded the might of Rustem, and he said how the battle had been sore, and how his mind had misgiven him of the issue. And he spake unto Human, saying:

"My mind is filled with thoughts of this aged man, mine adversary, for it would seem unto me that his stature is like unto mine, and that I behold about him the tokens that my mother recounted unto me. And my heart goeth out toward him, and I muse if it be Rustem, my father. For it behoveth me not to combat him. Wherefore, I beseech thee, tell unto me how this may be."

But Human answered and said, "Oft have I looked

upon the face of Rustem in battle, and mine eyes have beheld his deeds of valour; but this man in no wise resembleth him, nor is his manner of wielding his club the same."

These things spake Human in his vileness, because that Afrasiyab had enjoined him to lead Sohrab into destruction. And Sohrab held his peace, but he was not wholly satisfied.

Now when the day had begun to lighten the sky and clear away the shadows, Rustem and Sohrab strode forth unto the midway spot that stretched between the armies. And Sohrab bare in his hands a mighty club, and the garb of battle was upon him; but his mouth was full of smiles, and he asked of Rustem how he had rested, and he said:

"Wherefore hast thou prepared thy heart for battle? Cast from thee, I beg, this mace and sword of vengeance, and let us doff our armour, and seat ourselves together in amity, and let wine soften our angry deeds. For it seemeth unto me that this conflict is impure. And if thou wilt listen to my desires, my heart shall speak to thee of love, and I will make the tears of shame spring up into thine eyes. And for this cause I ask thee yet again, tell me thy name, neither hide it any longer, for I behold that thou art of noble race. And it would seem unto me that thou art Rustem, the chosen one, the Lord of Zaboulistan, the son of Zal, the son of Saum the hero."

But Rustem answered, "O hero of tender age, we are not come forth to parley but to combat, and mine ears are sealed against thy words of lure. I am an old man, and thou art young, but we are girded for battle, and the Master of the world shall decide between us."

Then Sohrab said, "O man of many years, wherefore

wilt thou not listen to the counsel of a stripling? I desired that thy soul should leave thee upon thy bed, but thou hast elected to perish in the combat. That which is ordained must be done, therefore let us make ready for the conflict."

So they made them ready, and when they had bound their steeds they fell upon each other, and the crash of their encounter was heard like thunder throughout the camps. And they measured their strength from the morning until the setting of the sun. And when the day was about to vanish, Sohrab seized upon Rustem by the girdle and threw him upon the ground, and kneeled upon him, and drew forth his sword from the scabbard, and would have severed his head from his trunk. Then Rustem knew that only wile could save him. So he opened his mouth and said:

"O young man, thou knowest not the customs of the combat. It is written in the laws of honour that he who overthroweth a brave man for the first time should not destroy him, but preserve him for fight a second time, then only is it given unto him to kill his adversary."

And Sohrab listened to Rustem's words of craft and stayed his hand, and he let the warrior go, and because that the day was ended he sought to fight no more, but turned him aside and chased the deer until the night was spent. Then came to him Human, and asked of the adventures of the day. And Sohrab told him how he had vanquished the tall man, and how he had granted him freedom. And Human reproached him with his folly, and said:

"Alas! young man, thou didst fall into a snare, for this is not the custom among the brave. And now perchance thou wilt yet fall under the hands of this warrior."

Sohrab was abashed when he heard the words of Human, but he said:

"Be not grieved, for in an hour we meet again in battle, and verily he will not stand a third time against my youthful strength."

Now while Sohrab was thus doing, Rustem was gone beside a running brook, and laved his limbs, and prayed to God in his distress. And he entreated of Ormuzd that He would grant him such strength that the victory must be his. And Ormuzd heard him, and gave to him such strength that the rock whereon Rustem stood gave way under his feet, because it had not power to bear him. Then Rustem saw it was too much, and he prayed yet again that part thereof be taken from him. And once more Ormuzd listened to his voice. Then when the time for combat was come, Rustem turned him to the meeting-place, and his heart was full of cares and his face of fears. But Sohrab came forth like a giant refreshed, and he ran at Rustem like to a mad elephant, and he cried with a voice of thunder:

"O thou who didst flee from battle, wherefore art thou come out once more against me? But I say unto thee, this time shall thy words of guile avail thee naught."

And Rustem, when he heard him, and looked upon him, was seized with misgiving, and he learned to know fear. So he prayed to Ormuzd that He would restore to him the power He had taken back. But he suffered not Sohrab to behold his fears, and they made them ready for the fight. And he closed upon Sohrab with all his new-found might, and shook him terribly, and though Sohrab returned his attacks with vigour, the hour of his overthrow was come. For Rustem took him by the girdle and hurled him unto the earth, and he broke his back like to

a reed, and he drew forth his sword to sever his body. Then Sohrab knew it was the end, and he gave a great sigh, and writhed in his agony, and he said:

"That which is come about, it is my fault, and henceforward will my youth be a theme of derision among the people. But I sped not forth for empty glory, but I went out to seek my father; for my mother had told me by what tokens I should know him, and I perish for longing after him. And now have my pains been fruitless, for it hath not been given unto me to look upon his face. Yet I say unto thee, if thou shouldest become a fish that swimmeth in the depths of the ocean, if thou shouldest change into a star that is concealed in the farthest heaven, my father would draw thee forth from thy hiding-place, and avenge my death upon thee when he shall learn that the earth is become my bed. For my father is Rustem the Pehliva, and it shall be told unto him how that Sohrab his son perished in the quest after his face."

When Rustem heard these words his sword fell from out of his grasp, and he was shaken with dismay. And there broke from his heart a groan as of one whose heart was racked with anguish. And the earth became dark before his eyes, and he sank down lifeless beside his son. But when he had opened his eyes once more, he cried unto Sohrab in the agony of his spirit. And he said:

"Bearest thou about thee a token of Rustem, that I may know that the words which thou speakest are true? For I am Rustem the unhappy, and may my name be struck from the lists of men!"

When Sohrab heard these words his misery was boundless, and he cried:

"If thou art indeed my father, then hast thou stained thy sword in the life-blood of thy son. And thou didst it

of thine obstinacy. For I sought to turn thee unto love, and I implored of thee thy name, for I thought to behold in thee the tokens recounted of my mother. But I appealed unto thy heart in vain, and now is the time gone by for meeting. Yet open, I beseech thee, mine armour and regard the jewel upon mine arm. For it is an onyx given unto me by my father, as a token whereby he should know me."

Then Rustem did as Sohrab bade him, and he opened his mail and saw the onyx; and when he had seen it he tore his clothes in his distress, and he covered his head with ashes. And the tears of penitence ran from his eyes, and he roared aloud in his sorrow. But Sohrab said:

"It is in vain, there is no remedy. Weep not, therefore, for doubtless it was written that this should be."

Now when the sun was set, and Rustem returned not to the camp, the nobles of Iran were afraid, and they went forth to seek him. And when they were gone but a little way they came upon Rakush, and when they saw that he was alone they raised a wailing, for they deemed that of a surety Rustem was perished. And they went and told Kai Kaous thereof, and he said:

"Let Tus go forth and see if this indeed be so, and if Rustem be truly fallen, let the drums call men unto battle that we may avenge him upon this Turk."

Now Sohrab, when he beheld afar off the men that were come out to seek Rustem, turned to his father and said:

"I entreat of thee that thou do unto me an act of love. Let not the Shah fall upon the men of Turan, for they came not forth in enmity to him but to do my desire, and on my head alone resteth this expedition. Wherefore I desire not that they should perish when I can defend

them no longer. As for me, I came like the thunder and I vanish like the wind, but perchance it is given unto us to meet again above."

Then Rustem promised to do the desires of Sohrab. And he went before the men of Iran, and when they beheld him yet alive they set up a great shout, but when they saw that his clothes were torn, and that he bare about him the marks of sorrow, they asked of him what was come to pass. Then he told them how he had caused a noble son to perish. And they were grieved for him, and joined in his wailing. Then he bade one among them to go forth into the camp of Turan, and deliver this message unto Human. And he sent word unto him, saying:

"The sword of vengeance must slumber in the scabbard. Thou art now leader of the host; return, therefore, whence thou camest, and depart across the river ere many days be fallen. As for me, I will fight no more, yet neither will I speak unto thee again, for thou didst hide from my son the tokens of his father, of thine iniquity thou didst lead him into this pit."

Then when he had thus spoken, Rustem turned him yet again to his son. And the nobles went with him, and they beheld Sohrab, and heard his groans of pain. And Rustem, when he saw the agony of the boy, was beside himself, and would have made an end of his own life, but the nobles suffered it not, and stayed his hand. Then Rustem remembered him that Kai Kaous had a balm mighty to heal. And he prayed Gudarz go before the Shah, and bear unto him a message of entreaty from Rustem his servant. And he said:

"O Shah, if ever I have done that which was good in thy sight, if ever my hand have been of avail unto thee,

recall now my benefits in the hour of my need, and have pity upon my dire distress. Send unto me, I pray thee, of the balm that is among thy treasures, that my son may be healed by thy grace."

And Gudarz outstripped the whirlwind in his speed to bear unto the Shah this message. But the heart of Kai Kaous was hardened, and he remembered not the benefits he had received from Rustem, and he recalled only the proud words that he had spoken before him. And he was afraid lest the might of Sohrab be joined to that of his father, and that together they prove mightier than he, and turn upon him. So he shut his ear unto the cry of his Pehliva. And Gudarz bore back the answer of the Shah, and he said:

"The heart of Kai Kaous is flinty, and his evil nature is like to a bitter gourd that ceaseth never to bear fruit. Yet I counsel thee, go before him thyself, and see if peradventure thou soften this rock."

And Rustem in his grief did as Gudarz counselled, and turned to go before the Shah, but he was not come before him ere a messenger overtook him, and told unto him that Sohrab was departed from the world. Then Rustem set up a wailing such as the earth hath not heard the like of, and he heaped reproaches upon himself, and he could not cease from plaining the son that was fallen by his hands. And he cried continually:

"I that am old have killed my son. I that am strong have uprooted this mighty boy. I have torn the heart of my child, I have laid low the head of a Pehliva."

Then he made a great fire, and flung into it his tent of many colours, and his trappings of Roum, his saddle, and his leopard-skin, his armour well tried in battle, and all the appurtenances of his throne. And he stood by and

looked on to see his pride laid in the dust. And he tore his flesh, and cried aloud:

"My heart is sick unto death."

Then he commanded that Sohrab be swathed in rich brocades of gold worthy his body. And when they had enfolded him, and Rustem learned that the Turanians had quitted the borders, he made ready his army to return unto Zaboulistan. And the nobles marched before the bier, and their heads were covered with ashes, and their garments were torn. And the drums of the war-elephants were shattered, and the cymbals broken, and the tails of the horses were shorn to the root, and all the signs of mourning were abroad.

Now Zal, when he saw the host returning thus in sorrow, marvelled what was come about; for he beheld Rustem at their head, wherefore he knew that the wailing was not for his son. And he came before Rustem and questioned him. And Rustem led him unto the bier and showed unto him the youth that was like in feature and in might unto Saum the son of Neriman, and he told him all that was come to pass, and how this was his son, who in years was but an infant, but a hero in battle. And Rudabeh too came out to behold the child, and she joined her lamentations unto theirs. Then they built for Sohrab a tomb like to a horse's hoof, and Rustem laid him therein in a chamber of gold perfumed with ambergris. And he covered him with brocades of gold. And when it was done, the house of Rustem grew like to a grave, and its courts were filled with the voice of sorrow. And no joy would enter into the heart of Rustem, and it was long before he held high his head.

Meantime the news spread even unto Turan, and there too did all men grieve and weep for the child of prowess

that was fallen in his bloom. And the King of Samengan tore his vestments, but when his daughter learned it she was beside herself with affliction. And Tahmineh cried after her son, and bewailed the evil fate that had befallen him, and she heaped black earth upon her head, and tore her hair, and wrung her hands, and rolled on the ground in her agony. And her mouth was never weary of plaining. Then she caused the garments of Sohrab to be brought unto her, and his throne and his steed. And she regarded them, and stroked the courser and poured tears upon his hoofs, and she cherished the robes as though they yet contained her boy, and she pressed the head of the palfrey unto her breast, and she kissed the helmet that Sohrab bad worn. Then with his sword she cut off the tail of his steed and set fire unto the house of Sohrab, and she gave his gold and jewels unto the poor. And when a year had thus rolled over her bitterness, the breath departed from out her body, and her spirit went forth after Sohrab her son.

CHAPTER VI

THE SEVEN SLEEPERS OF EPHESUS

ONE of the most picturesque myths of ancient days is that told by Jacques de Voragine, in his "Legenda Aurea":

"The seven sleepers were natives of Ephesus. The Emperor Decius, who persecuted the Christians, having come to Ephesus, ordered the erection of temples in the city, that all might come and sacrifice before him; and he commanded that the Christians should be sought out and given their choice, either to worship the idols, or to die. So great was the consternation in the city, that the friend denounced his friend, the father his son, and the son his father.

"Now there were in Ephesus seven Christians, Maximian, Malchus, Marcian, Dionysius, John, Serapion, and Constantine by name. These refused to sacrifice to the idols, and remained in their houses praying and fasting. They were accused before Decius, and they confessed themselves to be Christians. However, the Emperor gave them a little time to consider what line they would adopt. They took advantage of this reprieve to dispense their goods among the poor, and they retired, all seven, to Mount Celion, where they determined to conceal themselves.

"One of their number, Malchus, in the disguise of a physician, went to the town to obtain victuals. Decius, who had been absent from Ephesus for a little while,

returned, and gave orders for the seven to be sought. Malchus, having escaped from the town, fled, full of fear, to his comrades, and told them of the Emperor's fury. They were much alarmed; and Malchus handed them the loaves he had bought, bidding them eat, that, fortified by the food, they might have courage in the time of trial. They ate, and then, as they sat weeping and speaking to one another, by the will of God they fell asleep.

"The pagans sought everywhere, but could not find them, and Decius was greatly irritated at their escape. He had their parents brought before him, and threatened them with death if they did not reveal the place of concealment; but they could only answer that the seven young men had distributed their goods to the poor, and that they were quite ignorant as to their whereabouts.

"Decius, thinking it possible that they might be hiding in a cavern, blocked up the mouth with stones, that they might perish of hunger.

. . . . . .

"Three hundred and sixty years passed, and in the thirtieth year of the reign of Theodosius, there broke forth a heresy denying the resurrection of the dead.

"Now, it happened that an Ephesian was building a stable on the side of Mount Celion, and finding a pile of stones handy, he took them for his edifice, and thus opened the mouth of the cave. Then the seven sleepers awoke, and it was to them as if they had slept but a single night. They began to ask Malchus what decision Decius had given concerning them.

"'He is going to hunt us down, so as to force us to sacrifice to the idols,' was his reply. 'God knows,' replied Maximian, 'we shall never do that.' Then exhorting

his companions, he urged Malchus to go back to the town to buy some more bread, and at the same time to obtain fresh information. Malchus took five coins and left the cavern. On seeing the stones he was filled with astonishment; however, he went on toward the city; but what was his bewilderment, on approaching the gate, to see over it a cross! He went to another gate, and there he beheld the same sacred sign; and so he observed it over each gate of the city. He believed that he was suffering from the effects of a dream. Then he entered Ephesus, rubbing his eyes, and he walked to a baker's shop. He heard people using our Lord's name, and he was the more perplexed. 'Yesterday, no one dared pronounce the name of Jesus, and now it is on every one's lips. Wonderful! I can hardly believe myself to be in Ephesus.' He asked a passer-by the name of the city, and on being told that it was Ephesus, he was thunderstruck. Now he entered a baker's shop, and laid down his money. The baker, examining the coin, inquired whether he had found a treasure, and began to whisper to some others in the shop. The youth, thinking that he was discovered, and that they were about to conduct him to the emperor, implored them to let him alone, offering to leave loaves and money if he might only be suffered to escape. But the shop-men seizing him, said, 'Whoever you are, you have found a treasure; show us where it is, that we may share it with you, and then we will hide you.' Malchus was too frightened to answer. So they put a rope round his neck, and drew him through the streets into the market-place. The news soon spread that the young man had discovered a great treasure, and there was presently a vast crowd about him. He stoutly protested his innocence.

No one recognised him, and his eyes, ranging over the faces which surrounded him, could not see one which he had known, or which was in the slightest degree familiar to him.

"St. Martin, the bishop, and Antipater, the governor, having heard of the excitement, ordered the young man to be brought before them, along with the bakers.

"The bishop and the governor asked him where he had found the treasure, and he replied that he had found none, but that the few coins were from his own purse. He was next asked whence he came. He replied that he was a native of Ephesus, 'if this be Ephesus.'

"'Send for your relations—your parents, if they live here,' ordered the governor.

"'They live here certainly,' replied the youth; and he mentioned their names. No such names were known in the town. Then the governor exclaimed, 'How dare you say that this money belonged to your parents when it dates back three hundred and seventy-seven years, and is as old as the beginning of the reign of Decius, and it is utterly unlike our modern coinage? Do you think to impose on the old men and sages of Ephesus? Believe me, I shall make you suffer the severities of the law till you show where you made the discovery.'

"'I implore you,' cried Malchus, 'in the name of God, answer me a few questions, and then I will answer yours. Where is the Emperor Decius gone to?'

"The bishop answered, 'My son, there is no emperor of that name; he who was thus called died long ago.'

"Malchus replied, 'All I hear perplexes me more and more. Follow me, and I will show you my comrades, who fled with me into a cave of Mount Celion, only yes-

terday, to escape the cruelty of Decius. I will lead you to them.'

"The bishop turned to the governor. 'The hand of God is here,' he said. Then they followed, and a great crowd after them. And Malchus entered first into the cavern to his companions, and the bishop after him. And there they saw the martyrs seated in the cave, with their faces fresh and blooming as roses; so all fell down and glorified God. The bishop and the governor sent notice to Theodosius, and he hurried to Ephesus. All the inhabitants met him and conducted him to the cavern. As soon as the saints beheld the Emperor, their faces shone like the sun, and the Emperor gave thanks unto God, and embraced them, and said, 'I see you, as though I saw the Saviour restoring Lazarus.' Maximian replied, 'Believe us! for the faith's sake, God has resuscitated us before the great resurrection day, in order that you may believe firmly in the resurrection of the dead. For as the child is in its mother's womb living and not suffering, so have we lived without suffering, fast asleep.' And having thus spoken, they bowed their heads, and their souls returned to their Maker. The Emperor, rising, bent over them and embraced them weeping. He gave them orders for golden reliquaries to be made, but that night they appeared to him in a dream, and said that hitherto they had slept in the earth, and that in the earth they desired to sleep on till God should raise them again."

CHAPTER VII

GUY OF WARWICK

OF ALL the nobles of Britain none was so strong as Rohand, Earl of Warwick, Rockingham, and Oxford. He made just laws, and made them to be obeyed; nor king nor baron in the land could buy his favour with fine words or gold, or shield the wrong-doer from his punishment. Passing fair was Felice, his daughter, like some stately marble shaft of perfect mould; haughty was she as the great gerfalcon which spurns the earth and towers up into the noon to look the burning sun in the face. Wise masters, hoar with learning, came out from Toulouse to teach her the seven arts and sciences, until there was not her like for wisdom anywhere.

Earl Rohand had a favourite page, named Guy, son of his just and upright steward, Segard of Wallingford; a brave and fearless youth, of strong and well-knit frame, whom Heraud of Ardenne, his tutor, taught betimes to just with lance and sword, and how to hunt with hawk and hound by wood and river side.

It was the feast of Pentecost, when by old custom every maiden chose her love and every knight his leman. Guy, clad in a new silken dress, being made cup-bearer at the banquet table, saw for the first time the beautiful Felice, as, kneeling, he offered the golden ewer and basin and demask napkin to wash her finger-tips before the banquet. Thenceforward he became so love-stricken

with her beauty that he heard not the music of the gleemen, saw neither games nor tourneys, but dured in a dream, like one crazed, all through the fourteen days festival. Knights and fair dames praised his handsome figure and well-grown sinewy limbs; he heeded not—but once Felice gave him a courteous word as he offered her the wine-cup; he blushed and stammered and spilled the wine, and was rebuked for awkwardness.

The feast being over, Guy went away to his chamber, and there fell into a great love-sickness. Hopeless it seemed for a vassal to love one so far above him as his sovereign's daughter; so he gave himself up to despair, and his disease grew so sore that the most skilful leeches of Earl Rohand's court were unable to cure his complaint. In vain they let him of blood or gave him salve or potion. "There is no medicine of any avail," the leeches said. Guy murmured, "Felice: if one might find and bring Felice to me, I yet might live." "Felice?" the leeches said among themselves, and shook their heads, "It is not in the herbal. Felice? Felix? No, there is no plant of that name."

"No herb is Felice," sighing answered Guy, "but a flower—the fairest flower that grows."

"He is light-headed," they said. "The flower Felice? He seeks perchance the flower of happiness, growing in the garden of the blessed, away in Paradise. He is surely near his end."

"It is truly Paradise where Felice is," Guy answered

"You hear? You see," the leeches whispered one to another. "Come, let us go; for we can be of no more good."

Night came, and being left alone Guy thought to rise up from his bed and drag himself into the presence of

his mistress, there to die at her feet. So weak was he become, he scarce could stand, but fainted many times upon the way.

Now Felice had heard many whisperings how Guy was dying for love of her, since her handmaidens had compassion on the youth, and sought to turn her heart toward him; but Felice was in no mind to have a page for a lover. Howbeit on this very night she had a dream, wherein being straitly enjoined to entreat the youth with kindness as the only way to save a life which would hereafter be of great service to the world, she arose and came to a bower in the garden where Guy lay swooning on the floor. Felice would not stoop to help him, but her maids having restored him to his senses, Guy fell at her feet and poured out all his love before her. Never a word answered Felice, but stood calmly regarding him with haughty coldness. Then said one of her maids, "O lady! were I the richest king's daughter in the land, I could not turn away from love so strong and true." Felice rebuked her, saying, "Could not? Silly child, see that your soft heart do not prove your shame." So with a tingling cheek the maid withdrew abashed. Then said Felice to Guy, "Why kneel there weeping like a girl? Get up, and show if there is the making of a man in you. Hear what I have to say. The swan mates not with the swallow, and I will never wed beneath me. Prove that your love is not presumption. Show yourself my peer. For I could love a brave and valiant knight before whose spear men bowed as to a king, nor would I ask his parentage, prouder far to know that my children took their nobleness from a self-made nobleman. But a weeping, love-sick page! No! Go, fight and battle—show me something that you do that I can love. Meantime I look

for such a lover, and I care not if his name be Guy the page."

Then Guy took heart and said, "Lady, I ask no better boon than to have you for witness of what love for you can do."

Felice answered, "Deeds, not words. Be strong and valiant. I will watch and I will wait."

Then Guy took leave of his mistress and in the course of a few days regained his health, to the surprise of all the court, but more especially of the leeches who had given him over for dead, and coming to Earl Rohand, entreated him to make him a knight. To this Earl Rohand having agreed, Guy was knighted at the next feast of Holy Trinity with a dubbing worthy a king's son; and they brought him rich armour, and a good sword and spear and shield, and a noble steed with costly trappings, together with rich silken cloaks and mantles fur-trimmed, and of great price. Then bidding farewell to Segard his father, Sir Guy left Warwick with Heraud his tutor, and Sir Thorold and Sir Urry for company, and having reached the nearest seaport, set sail for Normandy in search of adventures wherein to prove his valour.

They came to Rouen, and whilst they tarried at an inn a tournament was proclaimed in honour of the fair Blancheflor, daughter to Regnier, Emperor of Germany, and the prize was the hand of the Princess, a white horse, two white hounds, and a white falcon. So Sir Guy and his companions rode into the lists, where was a great company of proven knights and champions. Three days they tourneyed, but none could withstand Sir Guy's strong arm. He overthrew Otho Duke of Pavia, Sir Garie the Emperor's son, Regnier Duke of Sessoyne, the Duke of Lowayne, and many more, till not a man was

left who dared encounter him; and being master of the field, he was adjudged the prize. The horse and hounds and falcon he sent by two messengers to Felice in England as trophies of his valour. Then he knelt before the beautiful Princess Blancheflor and said, "Lady, I battle in honour of my mistress, the peerless Felice, and am her servant," whereat the Emperor and his daughter, admiring his constancy, loaded him with rich presents and allowed him to depart.

Sir Guy then travelled through Spain, Lombardy, and Almayne, into far lands; and wheresoever a tournament was held, there he went and justed, coming out victor from them all; till the fame of his exploits spread over Christendom. So a year passed, and he returned to England unconquered, and renowned as the most valiant knight of his time. A while he sojourned in London with King Athelstan, who rejoiced to do him honour; then he came to Warwick, where he received from Earl Rohand a princely welcome. Then Sir Guy hastened to Felice.

"Fair mistress," said he, "have I now won your love? You have heard my deeds, how I have travelled all through Christendom, and have yet found no man stand against my spear. I have been faithful in my love, Felice, as well as strong in fight. I might have wedded with the best. King's daughters and princesses were prizes in the tournaments; but I had no mind for any prize but thee. Say, is it mine, sweet mistress?"

Then Felice kissed her knight and answered, "Right nobly have you won my love and worship, brave Sir Guy. You are more than my peer; you are become my sovereign; and my love pays willing homage to its lord. But for this same cause I will not wed you yet. I will not have

men point at me and say, 'There is a woman who for selfish love's sake, wedded the knight of most renown in Christendom ere yet he did his bravest deeds—drew him from his level to her own—made him lay by his sword and spear for the slothful pleasures of a wedded life, and dwarfed a brave man down to a soft gentleman.' Nay, dear one, I can wait, and very proudly, knowing myself your chiefest prize. But seek not to possess the prize too soon, lest your strivings for renown, being aimless, should wax feeble. It is because I love you that I hold your fame far dearer than my love. Go rather forth again, travel through heathen lands, defend the weak against the strong; go, battle for the right, show yourself the matchless knight you are; and God and my love go with thee."

Then Sir Guy gat him ready for his new quest. Earl Rohand tried to persuade him to remain at home, as likewise did his father Segard; and his mother, weeping, prayed him stay. She said, "Another year it may not fare so well with thee, my son. Leave well alone. Felice is cold and proud and cares not for thee, else she would not risk thy life again. What is it to her? If thou wert slain she would get another lover; we have no more sons."

Yet would not Sir Guy be turned from his purpose, but embarked with his companions, Sir Heraud, Sir Thorold, and Sir Urry, for Flanders. Thence he rode through Spain, Germany, and Lombardy, and bore away the prize at every tournament. But coming into Italy, he got a bad wound justing at Beneventum, which greatly weakened him.

Duke Otho of Pavia, whom Sir Guy overthrew in his first tournament at Rouen, thought now to he avenged on

him. So he set a chosen knight, Earl Lombard, with fifteen other knights to lie in ambush in a wood and slay Sir Guy; and as Sir Guy, with his three companions, came ambling slowly through the wood, he smarting and well-nigh faint with his wound, the men in ambush broke out from their concealment and called on him to yield. The danger made him forget his pain, and straightway he dressed his shield and spurred among them.

Sir Heraud, Sir Thorold, and Sir Urry killed the three first knights they rode against. Then Earl Lombard slew Sir Urry; and at the same time Hugo, nephew to Duke Otho, laid Sir Thorold dead at his horse's feet. Then only Sir Guy and Sir Heraud being left to fight, Sir Guy attacked Earl Lombard and smote him to the heart, whilst Sir Heraud chased Hugo, fleeing like a hound, and drove his spear throughout his body. Thus were Sir Urry and Sir Thorold avenged. But one of the felon knights, called Sir Gunter, smote Sir Heraud a mighty stroke when he was off his guard, and hewed his shield and coat of mail in pieces, and Sir Heraud fell to the earth covered with blood and lay as dead.

Thereupon Sir Guy's anger waxed furious at his master's death; and he spurred his horse so that fire rose from under its feet, and with one blow of his sword cleft Sir Gunter from his helmet to the pummel of his saddle. As for the other knights he slew them all except Sir Guichard, who fled on his swift steed to Pavia, and got back to Duke Otho.

Heavily Sir Guy grieved for the loss of his three friends, but most of all for his dear master Sir Heraud. He sought about the wood until he found a hermit. To him he gave a good steed, charging him to bury the bodies of Sir Urry and Sir Thorold. From Sir Heraud's body he

would not part. Lifting the old knight to his arms, he laid him across his horse, and led the steed by the bridle-rein till they came to an abbey, where he left the body with the abbot, promising rich presents in return for giving it sumptuous burial with masses and chants. But Sir Guy departed and hid himself in a hermit's cave away from the malice of Duke Otho, until his wound should be healed.

Now there was in the abbey whither Heraud's body was taken, a monk well skilled in leech-craft, who knew the virtues of all manner of grasses and herbs. And this monk, finding by his craft that life still flickered in the body, nursed and tended it; and after a long while Sir Heraud was well enough to travel. Disguised as a palmer he came into Burgundy, and there, to his great joy, found Sir Guy, who had come thither meaning to take his way back to England. But they lingered still, till Heraud should grow stronger, and so it fell out that they came to St. Omers. There they heard how the Emperor Regnier had come up against Segwin, Duke of Lavayne, laid waste his land, and besieged him in his strong city Seysone, because he had slain Sadoc, the Emperor's cousin, in a tournament. But when Sir Guy learned that Sadoc had first provoked Duke Segwin, and brought his death upon himself, he determined to help Segwin against his sovereign the Emperor Regnier. He therefore gathered fifty knights together with Heraud, and coming secretly at night to the city of Seysone, was let in at a postern gate without the enemy being aware. In the morning after mass they made a sally against their foes, which numbered thirty thousand strong, and routed them, taking many noble prisoners. Three times the Emperor came against the Greeks, each time with a new army larger than before. Twice did Sir Guy van-

quish the host, and drive them from the walls. The third time he took Sir Gaire, the Emperor's son, prisoner. and carried him into the city. Then the Emperor Regnier deterimned, since he could not take the place by assault, to beleaguer it, and starve the town into surrender. And it was so that, while his army was set down before the walls, the Emperor hunted alone in a wood hard by, and Sir Guy, meeting him there, gathered a branch of olive tree, and came bending to the Emperor, saying, "God save you, gentle sire. Duke Segwin sendeth me to make his peace with you. He will yield you all his lands and castles in burg and city, and hold them of you henceforth in vassalage, but he now would have your presence in the city to a feast." So the Emperor was forced to go with him into the city as a prisoner, albeit he was served with the humility due to a sovereign both by Sir Guy and Duke Segwin's knights. Sir Gaire and the other captive nobles came also and prayed for peace with Duke Segwin, for they had been so well treated that they felt nothing but the truest frindship for their captor. So it befell when the Emperor found himself feasting in the enemy's castle, surrounded by the flower of his own knights and nobles, and Duke Segwin and his band serving them humbly at table as though they had been servants in place of masters, he was touched by their generosity, and willingly agreed to a free and friendly peace. And this was celebrated by the Emperor giving Duke Segwin his niece to wife, whilst the Duke of Saxony wedded Duke Segwin's sister amid great rejoicings.

Now after this, learning that Ernis, Emperor of Greece, was besieged in Constantinople his capital by the Saracens, Sir Guy levied an army of a thousand knights and went to his assistance. Well pleased was Ernis at so

timely a succor, and he promised to reward Sir Guy by making him heir to the throne and giving him the hand of his only daughter the beautiful Loret. Then Sir Guy led the army forth from the city against the Soudan and his host, and defeated them so badly that for some days they were unable to rally their men for another encounter.

In the meantime, one of Sir Guy's knights named Sir Morgadour fell in love with the Princess Loret, and being envious of Sir Guy's achievements as well as jealous of such a rival, he sought how to embroil him with the Emperor and compass his disgrace. Wherefore one day when the Emperor Ernis was gone a-rivering with his hawks, Sir Morgadour challenged Sir Guy to play a game of chess in the Princess Loret's chamber. They played there, Sir Guy not thinking of treachery. But by-and-by the Princess entered, and Sir Morgadour after greeting her took his leave quickly and came to the Emperor Ernis, telling him how Sir Guy was alone in the chamber with his daughter. Ernis, however, paid little heed to the tale, for he said: "Well, and what of it? Loret is his promised bride, and Sir Guy is a good true knight. Away with your tales!" But Sir Morgadour was not to be baffled, so he went to Sir Guy and said: "Behold how little trust is to he placed in a king! Here is the Emperor Ernis mad wroth to hear you were alone with the Princess Loret, and swears he will have your life." Then Sir Guy in great anger summoned his knights, and was going over to the Saracens, when, on his way, he met the Emperor, who told him of the malice of Sir Morgadour and all was made plain.

But now the Saracens coming anew against the city, Sir Guy went forth to meet them with many engines upon

wheels which threw great stones quarried from a hill. Sir Guy and his army again defeated the Saracens, insomuch that a space of fifteen acres was covered so thick with dead that a man might not walk between, whilst the pile of slain around Sir Guy reached breast high. So the Soudan and his host withdrew to their camps.

Then Sir Morgadour bethought him of another wile. The Soudan had sworn to kill every Christian found in his camp, without regard to flag of truce or ambassage. So Sir Morgadour persuaded Ernis to send Sir Guy to the Soudan saying, that, since the war seemed likely to come to no speedy issue, it should be settled by single combat between two champions chosen from the Christian and the Saracen hosts. The counsel seemed good to Ernis, but yet he liked not to risk his son-in-law's life; wherefore he called his Parliament together and asked for some bold knight to go and bear this message. When all the others held their peace, Sir Guy demanded to be sent upon the business, neither could the prayers and entreaties of Ernis cause him to forego the enterprise. He clad himself in iron hose and a trusty hauberk, set a helm of steel, gold-circled, on his head, and having girt his sword about him, leapt on his steed without so much as touching stirrup, and rode up to the Soudan's pavilion. He well knew it from the rest, since on the top thereof flashed a great carbuncle stone.

There were feasting the Soudan, ten kings, and many barons, when Sir Guy walked into the pavilion and delivered his message with great roughness of speech. "Seize him and slay him!" cried the Soudan. But Sir Guy cut his way through his assailants and rushing on the Soudan cut off his head; and while he stooped to pick up the trophy with his left hand, with his right he slew six Sara-

cens, then fought his passage past them all to the tent door, and leapt upon his horse. But the whole Saracen host being roused he never would have got back for all his bravery, but that Heraud within the city saw in a dream the danger he was in, and assembling the Greek army and Sir Guy's knights, came to his rescue and put the Saracens to flight. Then after the battle, Sir Guy came in triumph to Constantinople and laid the Soudan's head at the feet of the Emperor Ernis.

Ernis now, being at peace from his enemies, would take Sir Guy through his realms. On their way they saw a dragon fighting a lion, and the lion having much the worst of the combat, Sir Guy must needs go and fight the dragon. After a hard battle he laid the monster dead at his feet, and the lion came and licked the hands of his deliverer, and would in no wise depart from his side.

Soon afterward the Emperor Ernis gathered a great company of princes, dukes, earls, barons, bishops, abbots, and priors to the wedding feast, and in presence of them all he gave Sir Guy to be ruler over half the kingdom, and led forth the Princess Loret to be his bride.

But when Sir Guy saw the wedding-ring, his old love came to his mind, and he bethought him of Felice. "Alas!" he cried, "Felice the bright and beautiful, my heart misgives me of forgetting thee. None other maid shall ever have my love." Then he fell into a swoon and when he came to himself he pleaded sudden sickness. So the marriage was put off, to the great distress of Ernis and his daughter Loret, and Sir Guy gat him to an inn. Heraud tended him there, and learned how it was for the sake of Felice that Guy renounced so fair a bride, dowered with so rich a kingdom. But after a fortnight, when he could no longer feign illness because of the

watchfullness of the Emperor and the Princess after his health, he was forced to return to court, and delay his marriage from day to day by one excuse and another, until at length fortune delivered him from the strait. The lion which Sir Guy had tamed was used to roam about the palace, and grew so gentle that none feared him and none sought him harm. But Sir Morgadour, being sore vexed to think that all his plans against Sir Guy had failed, determined to wreak his spite upon the lion. He therefore watched until he found the lion asleep within an arbour, and then wounded him to death with his sword. The faithful beast dragged himself so far as Sir Guy's chamber, licked his master's hands, and fell dead at his feet. But a little maid which had espied Sir Morgadour told Sir Guy who had slain his lion. Then Sir Guy went forth in quest of Sir Morgadour, and fought with him and slew him. He had forgiven the wrongs against himself, since he outwitted them; but he was fain to avenge his faithful favourite. Now Sir Morgadour was steward to the German Emperor Regnier. So Sir Guy showed Ernis that if he remained longer at his court, Regnier would surely make war on Greece to avenge his steward's death. Wherefore with this excuse he took his departure and set sail with Heraud in the first ship he could find. They landed in Germany, and visited the Emperor Regnier without telling anything about his steward's death. Then they came to Lorraine.

As Sir Guy took his way alone through a forest, having sent his servants on to prepare a place for him at an inn, he heard the groaning of a man in pain, and turning his horse that way, found a knight sore wounded, and like to die. This knight was named Sir Thierry, and served the Duke of Lorraine. He told how he was riding through

the wood with his lady, Osile, when fifteen armed men beset him, and forcibly carried off the lady to take her to Duke Otho of Pavia, his rival. Then said Sir Guy, "I also have a score to settle with Otho, the felon duke." Then he took Sir Thierry's arms and armour, and went in pursuit of the ravishers whom he soon overtook, and having slain every one, he set the lady on his steed and returned to the place where he had left the wounded knight. But now Sir Thierry was gone; for four knights of Duke Otho's band had come and carried him off. So Sir Guy set down the lady, and started to find the four knights. Having fought and vanquished them, he set Sir Thierry on his horse and returned. But now Osile was gone. He searched for many hours to find her, but in vain. So as nightfall drew on he took Sir Thierry to the inn. There by good fortune they found the lady, Sir Guy's servants having met her in the wood and brought her with them to await his coming. A leech soon came and dressed Sir Thierry's wounds, and by the careful tending of Osile and Sir Guy, he got well. Then Sir Guy and Sir Thierry swore brotherhood in arms.

Soon there came a messenger, saying that Duke Otho, hotly wroth at losing the fair Osile, had gone to lay waste the lands of Aubry, Sir Thierry's father; the Duke of Lorraine was likewise helping him. Thereupon Sir Guy equipped five hundred knights and came with Sir Thierry to the city of Gurmoise where Aubry dwelt. It was a well ramparted city, and after being beaten in two battles with Sir Guy, Duke Otho found, despite the larger numbers of his host, that he could not stand against the courage of the little army and the valour of its leader. Thinking therefore to gain Osile by treachery, he sent

an archbishop to Aubry, offering peace and pledging himself to confirm the marriage of Sir Thierry and Osile, provided only that the lovers would go and kneel in homage to their sovereign Duke of Lorraine. Thereon Sir Thierry and his bride, together with Sir Guy and Sir Heraud, set out unarmed, and after wending a day's journey out of Gurmoise, they met the Duke of Lorraine, who embraced and kissed them in token of peace. But Otho coming forward as if to do the like, made a sign to a band of men whom he had in waiting to seize them. These quickly surrounded Sir Heraud and Sir Thierry and carried them off; but Sir Guy with only his fists slew many of his assailants, and broke away to where a countryman stood with a staff in his hand. Snatching this for a weapon, Sir Guy beat down the quickest of his pursuers, and made his escape. Duke Otho cast Sir Thierry into a deep dungeon in Pavia, and meanwhile gave Osile a respite of forty days wherein to consent to be his bride. But the Duke of Lorraine carried off Sir Heraud.

Weary and hungered, and vexed at the loss of his friends, Sir Guy came to a castle where he sought harbour for the night. Sir Amys of the Mountain, who dwelt there, welcomed him with a good will, and hearing his adventures, offered to raise an army of fifteen hundred men to help him against Duke Otho. But to this Sir Guy said nay, because it would take too long. So, after a day or two, having hit upon a plan, he disguised himself by staining his face and darkening his hair and beard and eyebrows; and setting out alone, came to Duke Otho with a present of a war-horse of great price, and said, "You have in your keeping a dastard knight by name Sir Thierry, who has done me much despite, and

I would fain be avenged upon him." Then Duke Otho, falling into the trap, appointed him jailor of Sir Thierry.

The dungeon wherein Sir Thierry was prisoned was a pit of forty fathoms deep, and very soon Sir Guy spake from the pit's mouth bidding him be of good cheer, for he would certainly deliver him. But a false Lombard overheard these words, and thereby knowing that it was Sir Guy, ran off straightway to tell Duke Otho. Sir Guy followed quickly and sought to bribe the man with money to hold his peace, but without avail, for he would go into the palace where the Duke was, and opened his mouth to tell the tale. Then with one blow Sir Guy slew him at Duke Otho's feet. But Otho, very wroth, would have killed Sir Guy then and there, only that he averred that this was a certain traitor whom he found carrying food to the prisoner. Thus having appeased the Duke's anger, he gat away secretly to Osile, and bade her change her manner to Duke Otho, and make as though she was willing to have his love. The night before the day fixed for the wedding, Sir Guy let down a rope to Thierry in his pit, and having drawn him up, the two made all speed to the castle of Sir Amys. There, getting equipped with arms and armour, they leaped to horse on the morrow, and riding back to Pavia, met the wedding procession. Rushing into the midst Sir Guy slew Otho and Sir Thierry carried off Osile, whereupon they returned to Sir Amys with light hearts. And when the Duke of Lorraine had tidings of what had befallen Otho he had great fear of Sir Guy, and sent Sir Heraud back with costly gifts to make his peace. So Sir Thierry and Osile were wed, and a sumptuous banquet was held in their honour, with game, and hunting, and hawking, and justing, and singing of glee-men, more than can be told.

Now as Sir Guy went a-hunting one day, he rode away from his party to pursue a boar of great size. And this boar, being very nimble and fleet of foot, led him a long chase till he came into Flanders. And when he killed the boar he blew upon his horn the prize. Florentine, King of Flanders, hearing it in his palace, said, "Who is this that slays the tall game on my lands?" And he bade his son go forth and bring him in. The young prince coming with a haughty message to Sir Guy, the knight struck him with his hunting-horn, meaning no more than chastisement for his discourtesy. But by misadventure the prince fell dead at his feet. Thinking no more of the mishap, and knowing not who it was whom he had slain, Sir Guy rode on to the palace, and was received with good cheer at the King's table. But presently the prince's body being brought in, and Guy owning that he had done this deed, King Florentine took up an axe, and aimed a mighty blow at the slayer of his son. This Sir Guy quickly avoided, and when all arose to seize him, he smote them down on either hand, and fought his way through the hall till he reached his steed, whereon lightly leaping he hasted back to Sir Thierry.

Then after a short while he took leave of Sir Thierry, and came with Sir Heraud to England, to the court of King Athelstan at York. Scarce had he arrived there when tidings came that a great black and winged dragon was ravaging Northumberland, and had destroyed whole troops of men which went against him. Sir Guy at once armed himself in his best proven armour, and rode off in quest of the monster. He battled with the dragon from prime till undern, and on from undern until evensong, but for all the dragon was so strong and his hide so flinty Sir Guy overcame him, and thrust his sword down the

dragon's throat, and having cut off his head brought it to King Athelstan. Then while all England rang with this great exploit, he took his journey to Wallingford to see his parents. But they were dead; so after grieving many days for them he gave his inheritance to Sir Heraud, and hasted to Felice at Warwick.

Proudly she welcomed her true knight, and listened to the story of his deeds. Then laughingly Sir Guy asked, should he go another quest before they two were wed?

"Nay, dear one," said Felice, "my heart misgives me I was wrong to peril your life so long for fame's sake and my pride in you. A great love-longing I have borne to have you home beside me. But now you shall go no more forth. My pride it was that made me wish you great and famous, and for that I bade you go; but now, beside your greatness and your fame, I am become so little and so unworthy that I grow jealous lest you seek a worthier mate. We will not part again, dear lord Sir Guy." Then he kissed her tenderly and said, "Felice, whatever of fame and renown I may have gained, I owe it all to you. It was won for you, and but for you it had not been—and so I lay it at your feet in loving homage, owning that I hold it all of you."

So they were wed amid the joy of all the town of Warwick; for the spousings were of right royal sort, and Earl Rohand held a great tournament, and kept open court to all Warwick, Rockingham, and Oxford for fourteen days.

Forty days they had been wed, when it happened that as Sir Guy lay by a window of his tower, looking out upon the landscape, he fell to musing on his life. He thought, "How many men I have slain, how many battles I have fought, how many lands I have taken and destroyed!

All for a woman's love; and not one single deed done for my God!" Then he thought, "I will go a pilgrimage for the sake of the Holy Cross." And when Felice knew what he meditated she wept, and with many bitter tears besought him not to leave her. But he sighed and said, "Not yet one single deed for God above!" and held fast to his intent. So he clad himself in palmer's dress, and having taken a gold ring from his wife's hand and placed upon his own, he set out without any companion for the Holy Land.

But Felice fell into a great wan-hope at his departure, and grieved continually, neither would be comforted; for she said, "I have brought this on myself by sending him such perilous journeys heretofore, and now I cannot bear to part from him." But that she bore his child she would have taken her own life for very trouble of heart; only for that child's sake she was fain to live and mature it when it should be born.

Now after Sir Guy had made his toilsome pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and shrived him of his life, and done his prayers and penances about the holy places, he took his way to Antioch.

Beside a well he met a certain Earl Jonas, whose fifteen sons were held in prison till he should find a champion to deliver the Saracen Sir Triamour from the hands of a fierce and terrible Ethiopian giant named Amiraunt. So Sir Guy took arms again, and rode into the lists, and fought with Amiraunt and slew him; thus both Sir Triamour was delivered from his enemy, and the sons of Earl Jonas were restored to him. After this, Sir Guy travelled many years as a pilgrim of the Cross, till in his wanderings, chancing to come into Almayne, he there fell in with Sir Thierry, who, dressed in palmer's weeds, made

sorry complaint. Sir Thierry told how a knight named Barnard inherited Pavia in the room of his cousin Duke Otho; and how Barnard, being at enmity with him because of the slaying of Duke Otho, had never rested from doing him mischief with his sovereign, until the Duke of Lorraine dispossessed him from his lands and brought him into poverty. Howbeit Sir Guy would not reveal himself, and Sir Thierry being faint and weary, laid his head upon Sir Guy's knees, and so great a heaviness came over him that he fell asleep. As he slept, Sir Guy, watching him, saw a small white weasel creep out from the mouth of the sleeping man, and run to a little rivulet that was hard by, going to and fro beside the bank, not seeming wistful how to get across. Then Sir Guy rose gently and laid his sword athwart the stream from bank to bank; so the weasel passed over the sword, as it had been a bridge, and having made his way to a hole at the foot of the hill on the other side, went in thereat. But presently the weasel came out, and crossing the stream in the same manner as before jumped into the sleeper's mouth again. Then Sir Thierry woke and told his dream. "I dreamed," said he, "that I came beside a mighty torrent which I knew not how to pass, until I found a bridge of shining steel, over which I went, and came into a cavern underground, and therein I found a palace full of gold and jewels. I pray thee, brother palmer, read to me this dream."

Then Sir Guy said that without doubt it betokened a fair treasure hid by a waterside, and with that showed him the hole under the hill whereat he had seen the weasel go in. There they digged and found the treasure, which was very great; yet Sir Guy would have no share therein, but took leave of Sir Thierry without ever making

himself known, and came to Lorraine the duke that was Sir Thierry's sovereign.

Seeing a palmer the Duke of Lorraine asked tidings of his travels. "Sir," said the palmer, "men in all lands speak of Sir Thierry, and much do blame you for taking away his heritage at the bidding of so false a knight as Sir Barnard. And palmer though I be, I yet will prove Sir Barnard recreant and traitor upon his body, and thereto I cast down my glove." Then Sir Barnard took up the glove, and Sir Guy being furnished with armour and a sword and shield and spear, they did battle together. And in the end Sir Guy overcame and slew Sir Barnard, and demanded of the duke to restore Sir Thierry to his possessions, which being granted, he went in search of the banished man, and having found him in a church making his prayer, brought him straightway to the duke, and thus they were made friends. And when Sir Thierry found who his deliverer was he was exceeding glad and would willingly have divided all his inheritance with him. But Sir Guy would receive neither fee nor reward, and after he had abode some time with him at the court, he took his way to England.

Now Athelstan was besieged in Winchester by Anlaf King of Denmark, and could not come out of the city for the great host that was arrayed against him, whilst all the folk within the city walls were famishing for want of food and thought of nothing but surrender. Moreover King Anlaf had proclaimed a challenge, giving them seven days' grace wherein either to deliver up the city keys, or to find a champion who should fight against the great and terrible Danish giant Colbrand; and every day for seven days' the giant came before the walls and cried for a man to fight with him. But there was found no man so

hardy to do battle with Colbrand. Then King Athelstan, as he walked to and fro in his city and saw the distress of his people, was suddenly aware of a light that shone about him very brightly, and he heard a voice which charged him to intrust his cause to the first poor palmer he should meet. Soon after he met a palmer in the city, and weening not that it was Sir Guy, kneeled humbly to him, in sure faith in the heavenly voice, and asked his help. "I am an old man," said the palmer, "with little strength except what Heaven might give me for a people's need beset by enemies. But yet for England's sake and with Heaven's help I will undertake this battle."

They then clothed him in the richest armour that the city could furnish, with a good hauberk of steel, and a helmet whose gold circle sparkled with precious stones, and on the top whereof stood a flower wrought of divers colours in rare gems. Gloves of mail he wore, and greaves upon his legs, and a shirt of ring-mail upon his body, with a quilted gambeson beneath: sharp was the sword, and richly carved the heavy spear he bare; his threefold shield was overlaid with gold. They led forth to him a swift steed; but before he mounted he went down upon his knees and meekly told his beads, praying God to succor him that day. And the two kings held a parley for an hour, Anlaf promising on his part that if his champion fell he would go back with all his host to Denmark and never more make war on Britain, whilst Athelstan agreed, if his knight were vanquished, to make Anlaf King of England, and henceforth to be his vassal and pay tribute both of gold and silver money.

Then Colbrand stode forth to the battle. So great was he of stature that no horse could bear him, nor indeed could any man make a cart wherein to carry him.

He was armed with black armour of so great weight that a score of men could scarce bear up his hauberk only, and it took three to carry his helmet. He bare a great dart within his hand, and slung around his body were swords and battle-axes more than two hundred in number.

Sir Guy rode boldly at him, but his spear shivered into pieces against the giant's armour. Then Colbrand threw three darts. The first two passed wide, but the third crashed through Sir Guy's shield, and glided betwixt his arm and side, nor fell to ground till it had sped over a good acre of the field. Then a blow from the giant's sword just missed the knight, but lighting on his saddle at the back of him hewed horse and saddle clean in two; so Sir Guy was brought to ground. Yet lightly sprang he to his feet, and though seemingly but a child beside the monster man, he laid on hotly with his sword upon the giant's armour, until the sword brake in his hands. Then Colbrand called on him to yield, since he had no longer a weapon wherewith to fight. "Nay," answered Sir Guy, "but I will have one ane of thine," and with that ran deftly to the giant's side and wrenched away a battle-axe wherewith he maintained the combat. Right well Sir Guy endured while Colbrand's mighty strokes shattered his armour all about him, until his shield being broke in pieces it seemed he could no longer make defence, and the Danes raised a great shout at their champion's triumph. Then Colbrand aimed a last stroke at the knight to lay him low, but Sir Guy lightly avoiding it, the giant's sword smote into the earth a foot or more, and before he could withdraw it or free his hand, Sir Guy hewed off the arm with his battle-axe; and since Colbrand's weight leaned on that arm, he fell to the ground. So Sir Guy cut off his head, and triumphed

over the giant Colbrand, and the Danes withdrew to their own country.

Then without so much as telling who he was, Sir Guy doffed his armour and put on his palmer's weeds again, and secretly withdrawing himself from all the feasts and games they held in honour of him in the city of Winchester, passed out alone and took his journey toward Warwick on foot.

Many a year had gone since he had left his wife and home. The boy whom Felice had borne him, named Raynburn, he had never seen; nor, as it befell, did he ever see his son. For Raynburn in his childhood had been stolen away by Saracens and carried to a far heathen country, where King Aragus brought him up and made him first his page, then chamberlain, and as he grew to manhood, knighted him. And now he fought the battles of King Aragus with a strong arm like his father Guy's, neither could any endure against his spear. But all these years Felice had passed in prayer and charity, entertaining pilgrims and tired wayfarers, and comforting the sick and the distressed. And it was so that Sir Guy, all travel-worn and with his pilgrim's staff in hand, came to her house and craved an alms. She took him in and washed his feet and ministered to him, asking oftentimes if in his travels he had seen her lord Sir Guy. But when he watched her gentleness to the poor and to the children at her gate, he feared to break in upon her holy life, and so refrained himself before her and would not reveal himself, but with a heavy heart came out from the lady's door and gat him to a hermit's cell. There he abode in fasting and in penitence many weeks, till feeling his end draw near, he took the ring from his finger and sent it by a herdsman to Felice. "Where got you this token?"

cried Felice, all trembling with her wonderment and fear. "From a poor beggar-man that lives in yonder cell," the herdsman answered. "From a beggar? Nay, but from a kingly man," said Felice, "for he is my husband, Guy of Warwick!" and gave the herdsman a hundred marks. Then she hasted and came to Sir Guy in his hermit's cell, and for a long space they wept in each other's arms and neither spake a word.

Weaker and fainter waxed Sir Guy. In a little while he died, and Felice closed his tired eyes. Fifteen weary days she lingered sore in grief, and then God's angel came and closed her own.

CHAPTER VIII

CHEVY CHASE

God prosper long our noble king,
Our lives and safeties all;
A woeful hunting once there did
In Chevy Chase befall.

To drive the deer with hound and horn
Earl Percy took the way;
The child may rue that is unborn
The hunting of that day.

The stout earl of Northumberland
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure in the Scottish woods
Three summer days to take—

The chiefest harts in Chevy Chase
To kill and bear away.
These tidings to Earl Douglas came
In Scotland where he lay;

Who sent Earl Percy present word
He would prevent his sport.
The English earl not fearing that,
Did to the woods resort.

With fifteen hundred bowmen bold,
All chosen men of might,
Who knew full well in time of need
To aim their shafts aright.

The gallant greyhound swiftly ran
To chase the fallow deer;
On Monday they began to hunt
Ere daylight did appear;

And long before high noon they had
A hundred fat bucks slain;
Then having dined, the drovers went
To rouse the deer again.

The bowmen mustered on the hills,
Well able to endure;
Their backsides all with special care
That day were guarded sure.

The hounds ran swiftly through the woods,
The nimble deer to take,
That with their cries the hills and dales
An echo shrill did make.

Lord Percy to the quarry went
To view the tender deer;
Quoth he, "Earl Douglas promised once
This day to meet me here.

"But if I thought he would not come,
No longer would I stay";
With that a brave young gentleman
Thus to the earl did say:

"Lo, yonder doth Earl Douglas come,
His men in armour bright;
Full twenty hundred Scottish spears
All marching in our sight;

"All men of pleasant Teviotdale,
Fast by the River Tweed."
"O cease your sports," Earl Percy said,
"And take your bows with speed;

"And now with me, my countrymen,
Your courage forth advance,
For there was never champion yet,
In Scotland or in France,

"That ever did on horseback come,
And if my hap it were,
I durst encounter man for man
With him to break a spear."

Earl Douglas on his milk-white steed,
Most like a baron bold,
Rode foremost of his company,
Whose armour shone like gold.

"Show me," said he, "whose men you be
That hunt so boldly here,
That, without my consent, do chase
And kill my fallow deer."

The first man that did answer make,
Was noble Percy he,
Who said, "We list not to declare
Nor show whose men we be:

"Yet will we spend our dearest blood
Thy chiefest harts to slay."
Then Douglas swore a solemn oath,
And thus in rage did say:

"Ere thus I will out-braved be,
One of us two shall die;
I know thee well, an earl thou art—
Lord Percy, so am I.

"But trust me, Percy, pity it were,
And great offence, to kill
Any of these our guiltless men,
For they have done none ill.

"Let thou and I the battle try,
And set our men aside."
"Accurst be he," Earl Percy said,
"By whom it is denied."

Then stept a gallant squire forth—
Witherington was his name—
Who said, "I would not have it told
To Henry, our king, for shame,

"That e'er my captain fought on foot,
And I stood looking on.
You be two earls," quoth Witherington,
"And I a squire alone;

"I'll do the best that do I may,
While I have power to stand;
While I have power to wield my sword,
I'll fight with heart and hand."

Our English archers bent their bows—
  Their hearts were good and true;
At the first flight of arrows sent,
  Full four score Scots they slew.

To drive the deer with hound and horn,
  Douglas bade on the bent,
Two captains moved with mickle might,
  Their spears to shivers went.

They closed full fast on every side,
  No slackness there was found,
But many a gallant gentleman
  Lay gasping on the ground.

O Christ! it was great grief to see
  How each man chose his spear,
And how the blood out of their breasts
  Did gush like water clear.

At last these two stout earls did meet
  Like captains of great might;
Like lions wode, they laid on lode;
  They made a cruel fight.

They fought until they both did sweat,
  With swords of tempered steel,
Till blood down their cheeks like rain
  They trickling down did feel.

"O yield thee, Percy!" Douglas said,
  "And in faith I will thee bring
Where thou shalt high advanced be
  By James, our Scottish king.

"Thy ransom I will freely give,
And this report of thee,
Thou art the most courageous knight
That ever I did see."

"No, Douglas," quoth Earl Percy then,
"Thy proffer I do scorn;
I will not yield to any Scot
That ever yet was born."

With that there came an arrow keen,
Out of an English bow,
Which struck Earl Douglas on the breast
A deep and deadly blow.

Who never said more words than these:
"Fight on, my merry men all!
For why, my life is at an end,
Lord Percy sees my fall."

Then leaving life, Earl Percy took
The dead man by the hand;
Who said, "Earl Douglas, for thy life
Would I had lost my land!

"O Christ! my very heart doth bleed
For sorrow for thy sake,
For sure a more redoubted knight
Mischance could never take."

A knight amongst the Scots there was
Which saw Earl Douglas die,
Who straight in heart did vow revenge
Upon the Lord Percy.

Sir Hugh Montgomery was he called,
Who, with a spear full bright,
Well mounted on a gallant steed,
Ran fiercely through the fight,

And past the English archers all,
Without all dread or fear,
And through Earl Percy's body then
He thrust his hateful spear.

With such a vehement force and might
His body he did gore,
The staff ran through the other side
A large cloth-yard, and more.

Thus did both those nobles die,
Whose courage none could stain;
An English archer then perceived
The noble earl was slain.

He had a good bow in his hand
Made of a trusty tree;
An arrow of a cloth-yard long
To the hard head haled he.

Against Sir Hugh Montgomery
His shaft full right he set;
The gray-goose-wing that was thereon
In his heart's blood was wet.

This fight from break of day did last
Till setting of the sun,
For when they rang the evening-bell
The battle scarce was done.

With stout Earl Percy there was slain
Sir John of Egerton,
Sir Robert Harcliff and Sir William,
Sir James, that bold baron.

And with Sir George and Sir James,
Both knights of good account,
Good Sir Ralph Raby there was slain,
Whose prowess did surmount.

For Witherington needs must I wail
As one in doleful dumps.
For when his legs were smitten off,
He fought upon his stumps.

And with Earl Douglas there was slain
Sir Hugh Montgomery,
And Sir Charles Morrell, that from field
One foot would never flee;

Sir Roger Heuer of Harcliff, too,
His sister's son was he;
Sir David Lambwell, well esteemed,
But saved he could not be.

And the Lord Maxwell, in like case,
With Douglas he did die;
Of twenty hundred Scottish spears,
Scarce fifty-five did fly.

Of fifteen hundred Englishmen
Went home but fifty-three;
The rest in Chevy Chase were slain,
Under the greenwood tree.

Next day did many widows come
  Their husbands to bewail;
They washed their wounds in brinish sears,
  But all would not prevail.

Their bodies, bathed in purple blood,
  They bore with them away;
They kissed them dead a thousand times
  Ere they were clad in clay.

The news was brought to Edinburgh,
  Where Scotland's king did reign,
That brave Earl Douglas suddenly
  Was with an arrow slain.

"O heavy news!" King James can say,
  "Scotland may witness be
I have not any captain more
  Of such account as he."

Like tidings to King Henry came
  Within as short a space,
That Percy of Northumberland
  Was slain at Chevy Chase.

"Now God be with him!" said our king,
  "Since it will no better be;
I trust I have within my realm
  Five hundred as good as he.

"Yet shall not Scots nor Scotland say
  But I will vengeance take,
And be revenged on them all
  For brave Earl Percy's sake."

This vow the king did well perform
After on Humble-down;
In one day fifty knights were slain
With lords of great renown.

And of the rest, of small account,
Did many hundreds die:
Thus endeth the hunting in Chevy Chase
Made by the Earl Percy.

God save our king, and bless this land
With plenty, joy, and peace,
And grant henceforth that foul debate
'Twixt noble men may cease!

CHAPTER IX

THE FATE OF THE CHILDREN OF LIR

NOW at the time when the Tuatha de Danaan chose a king for themselves after the battle of Tailltin, and Lir heard the kingship was given to Bodb Dearg, it did not please him, and he left the gathering without leave and with no word to any one; for he thought it was he himself had a right to be made king. But if he went away himself, Bodb was given the kingship none the less, for not one of the five begrudged it to him but only Lir. And it is what they determined, to follow after Lir, and to burn down his house, and to attack himself with spear and sword, on account of his not giving obedience to the king they had chosen. "We will not do that," said Bodb Dearg, "for that man would defend any place he is in; and besides that," he said, "I am none the less king over the Tuatha de Danaan, although he does not submit to me."

All went on like that for a good while, but at last a great misfortune came on Lir, for his wife died from him after a sickness of three nights. And that came very hard on Lir, and there was heaviness on his mind after her. And there was great talk of the death of that woman in her own time.

And the news of it was told all through Ireland, and it came to the house of Bodb, and the best of the Men of Dea were with him at that time. And Bodb said: "If Lir had a mind for it," he said, "my help and my friend-

ship would be good for him now, since his wife is not living to him. For I have here with me the three young girls of the best shape, and the best appearance, and the best name in all Ireland, Aobh, Aoife, and Aihbhe, the three daughters of Oilell of Aran, my own three nurse-lings." The Men of Dea said then it was a good thought he had, and that what he said was true.

Messages and messengers were sent then from Bodb Dearg to the place Lir was, to say that if he had a mind to join with the Son of the Dagda and to acknowledge his lordship, he would give him a foster-child of his foster-children. And Lir thought well of the offer, and he set out on the morrow with fifty chariots from Sidhe Fionna-chaidh; and he went by every short way till he came to Bodb's dwelling-place at Loch Dearg, and there was a welcome before him there, and all the people were merry and pleasant before him, and he and his people got good attendance that night.

And the three daughters of Oilell of Aran were sitting on the one seat with Bodb Dearg's wife, the queen of the Tuatha de Danaan, that was their foster-mother. And Bodb said: "You may have your choice of the three young girls, Lir." "I cannot say," said Lir, "which one of them is my choice, but whichever of them is the eldest, she is the noblest, and it is better for me to take her." "If that is so," said Bodb, "it is Aobh is the eldest, and she will be given to you, if it is your wish." "It is my wish," he said. And he took Aobh for his wife that night, and he stopped there for a fortnight, and then he brought her away to his own house, till he would make a great wedding-feast.

And in the course of time Aobh brought forth two children, a daughter and a son, Fionnuala and Aodh

their names were. And after a while she was brought to bed again, and this time she gave birth to two sons, and they called them Fiachra and Conn. And she herself died at their birth. And that weighed very heavy on Lir, and only for the way his mind was set on his four children he would have gone near to die of grief.

The news came to Bodb Dearg's place, and all the people gave out three loud, high cries, keening their nursling. And after they had keened her it is what Bodb Dearg said: "It is a fret to us our daughter to have died, for her own sake and for the sake of the good man we gave her to, for we are thankful for his friendship and his faithfulness. However," he said, "our friendship with one another will not be broken, for I will give him for a wife her sister Aoife."

When Lir heard that he came for the girl and married her, and brought her home to his house. And there was honour and affection with Aoife for her sister's children; and indeed no person at all could see those four children without giving them the heart's love.

And Bodb Dearg used often to be going to Lir's house for the sake of those children; and he used to bring them to his own place for a good length of time, and then he would let them go back to their own place again. And the Men of Dea were at that time using the Feast of Age in every hill of the Sidhe in turn; and when they came to Lir's hill those four children were their joy and delight for the beauty of their appearance; and it is where they used to sleep, in beds in sight of their father Lir. And he used to rise up at the break of every morning, and to lie down among his children.

But it is what came of all this, that a fire of jealousy

was kindled in Aoife, and she got to have a dislike and a hatred of her sister's children.

Then she let on to have a sickness, that lasted through nearly the length of a year. And the end of that time she did a deed of jealousy and cruel treachery against the children of Lir.

And one day she got her chariot yoked, and she took the four children in it, and they went forward toward the house of Bodb Dearg; but Fionnuala had no mind to go with her, for she knew by her she had some plan for their death or their destruction, and she had seen in a dream that there was treachery against them in Aoife's mind. But all the same she was not able to escape from what was before her.

And when they were on their way Aoife said to her people: "Let you kill now," she said, "the four children of Lir, for whose sake their father has given up my love, and I will give you your own choice of a reward out of all the good things of the world." "We will not do that indeed," said they; "and it is a bad deed you have thought of, and harm will come to you out of it."

And when they would not do as she bade them, she took out a sword herself to put an end to the children with; but she being a woman and with no good courage, and with no great strength in her mind, she was not able to do it.

They went on then west to Loch Dairbhreach, the Lake of the Oaks, and the horses were stopped there. And Aoife bade the children of Lir to go out and bathe in the lake, and they did as she bade them. And as soon as Aoife saw them out in the lake she struck them with a Druid rod, and put on them the shape of four swans, white and beautiful. And it is what she said: "Out with

you, children of the king, your luck is taken away from you forever; it is sorrowful the story will be to your friends it is with flocks of birds your cries will be heard for ever."

And Fionnuala said: "Witch, we know now what your name is, you have struck us down with no hope of relief; but although you put us from wave to wave, there are times when we will touch the land. We shall get help when we are seen; help, and all that is best for us; even though we have to sleep upon the lake, it is our minds will be going abroad early."

And then the four children of Lir turned toward Aoife, and this is what Fionnuala said: "It is a bad deed you have done, Aoife, and it is a bad fulfilling of friendship, you to destroy us without cause; and vengeance for it will come upon you, and you will fall in satisfaction for it, for your power for our destruction is not greater than the power of our friends to avenge it on you; and put some bounds now," she said, "to the time this enchantment is to stop on us." "I will do that," said Aoife, "and it is worse for you, you to have asked it of me. And the bounds I set to your time are this, till the Woman from the South and the Man from the North will come together. And since you ask to hear it of me," she said, "no friends and no power that you have will be able to bring you out of these shapes you are in through the length of your lives, until you have been three hundred years on Loch Dairbhreach, and three hundred years on Sruth na Maoile between Ireland and Alban, and three hundred years at Irrus Domnann and Inis Gluaire; and these are to be your journeys from this out," she said.

But then repentance came on Aoife, and she said: "Since there is no other help for me to give you now, you may keep your own speech; and you will be singing sweet

music in the Sidhe, that would put the men of the earth to sleep, and there will be no music in the world equal to it; and your own sense and your own nobility will stay with you, the way it will not weigh so heavy on you to be in the shape of birds. And go away out of my sight now, children of Lir," she said, "with your white faces, with your stammering Irish. It is a great curse on tender lads, they to be driven out on the rough wind. Nine hundred years to be on the water, it is a long time for any one to be in pain; it is I put this on you through treachery, it is best for you to do as I tell you now.

"Lir, that got victory with so many a good cast, his heart is a kernel of death in him now; the groaning of the great hero is a sickness to me, though it is I that have well earned his anger."

And then the horses were caught for Aoife, and the chariot yoked for her, and she went on to the palace of Bodb Dearg, and there was a welcome before her from the chief people of the place. And the son of the Dagda asked her why she did not bring the children of Lir with her. "I will tell you that," she said. "It is because Lir has no liking for you, and he will not trust you with his children, from fear you might keep them from him altogether."

"I wonder at that," said Bodb Dearg, "for those children are dearer to me than my own children." And he thought in his own mind it was deceit the woman was doing on him, and it is what he did, he sent messengers to the North to Sidhe Fionnachaidh. And Lir asked them what did they come for. "On the head of your children," said they. "Are they not gone to you along with Aoife?" he said. "They are not," said they; "and Aoife said it was yourself would not let them come."

It is downhearted and sorrowful Lir was at that news, for he understood well it was Aoife had destroyed or made an end of his children. And early in the morning of the morrow his horses were caught, and he set out on the road to the Southwest. And when he was as far as the shore of Loch Dairbhreach, the four children saw the horses coming toward them, and it is what Fionnuala said: "A welcome to the troop of horses I see coming near to the lake; the people they are bringing are strong, there is sadness on them; it is us they are following, it is for us they are looking; let us move over to the shore, Aodh, Fiachra, and comely Conn. Those that are coming can be no others in the world but only Lir and his household."

Then Lir came to the edge of the lake, and he took notice of the swans having the voice of living people, and he asked them why was it they had that voice.

"I will tell you that, Lir," said Fionnuala. "We are your own four children, that are after being destroyed by your wife, and by the sister of our own mother, through the dint of her jealousy." "Is there any way to put you into your own shapes again?" said Lir. "There is no way," said Fionnuala, "for all the men of the world could not help us till we have gone through our time, and that will not be," she said, "till the end of nine hundred years."

When Lir and his people heard that, they gave out three great heavy shouts of grief and sorrow and crying.

"Is there a mind with you," said Lir, "to come to us on the land, since you have not your own sense and your memory yet?" "We have not the power," said Fionnuala, "to live with any person at all from this time; but we have our own language, the Irish, and we have

the power to sing sweet music, and it is enough to satisfy the whole race of men to be listening to that music. And let you stop here to-night," she said, "and we will be making music for you."

So Lir and his people stopped there listening to the music of the swans, and they slept there quietly that night. And Lir rose up early on the morning of the morrow and he made this complaint:

"It is time to go out from this place. I do not sleep though I am in my lying down. To be parted from my dear children, it is that is tormenting my heart.

"It is a bad net I put over you, bringing Aoife, daughter of Oilell of Aran, to the house. I would never have followed that advice if I had known what it would bring upon me.

"O Fionnuala, and comely Conn, O Aodh, O Fiachra of the beautiful arms; it is not ready I am to go away from you, from the border of the harbour where you are."

Then Lir went on to the palace of Bodb Dearg, and there was a welcome before him there; and he got a reproach from Bodb Dearg for not bringing his children along with him. "My grief!" said Lir. "It is not I that would not bring my children along with me; it was Aoife there beyond, your own foster-child and the sister of their mother, that put them in the shape of four white swans on Loch Dairbhreach, in the sight of the whole of the men of Ireland; but they have their sense with them yet, and their reason, and their voice, and their Irish."

Bodb Dearg gave a great start when he heard that, and he knew what Lir said was true, and he gave a very sharp reproach to Aoife, and he said: "This treachery will be worse for yourself in the end, Aoife, than to the

children of Lir. And what shape would you yourself think worst of being in?" he said.

"I would think worst of being a witch of the air," she said. "It is into that shape I will put you now." said Bodb. And with that he struck her with a Druid wand, and she was turned into a witch of the air there and then, and she went away on the wind in that shape, and she is in it yet, and will be in it to the end of life and time.

As to Bodb Dearg and the Tuatha de Danaan they came to the shore of Loch Dairbhreach, and they made their camp there to be listening to the music of the swans.

And the Sons of the Gael used to be coming no less than the Men of Dea to hear them from every part of Ireland, for there never was any music or any delight heard in Ireland to compare with that music of the swans. And they used to be telling stories, and to be talking with the men of Ireland every day, and with their teachers and their fellow-pupils and their friends. And every night they used to sing very sweet music of the Sidhe; and every one that heard that music would sleep sound and quiet whatever trouble or long sickness might be on him; for every one that heard the music of the birds, it is happy and contented he would be after it.

These two gatherings now of the Tuatha de Danaan and of the Sons of the Gael stopped there around Loch Dairbhreach through the length of three hundred years. And it is then Fionnuala said to her brothers: "Do you know," she said, "we have spent all we have to spend of our time here, but this one night only."

And there was great sorrow on the sons of Lir when they heard that, for they thought it the same as to be living people again, to be talking with their friends and their companions on Loch Dairbhreach, in comparison

with going on the cold, fretful sea of the Maoil in the North.

And they came early on the morrow to speak with their father and with their foster-father, and they bade them farewell, and Fionnuala made this complaint:

"Farewell to you, Bodb Dearg, the man with whom all knowledge is in pledge. And farewell to our father along with you, Lir of the Hill of the White Field.

"The time is come, as I think, for us to part from you, O pleasant company; my grief it is not on a visit we are going to you.

"From this day out, O friends of our heart, our comrades, it is on the tormented course of the Maoil we will be, without the voice of any person near us.

"There hundred years there, and three hundred years in the bay of the men of Domnann, it is a pity for the four comely children of Lir, the salt waves of the sea to be their covering by night.

"O three brothers, with the ruddy faces gone from you, let them all leave the lake now, the great troop that loved us, it is sorrowful our parting is."

After that complaint they took to flight, lightly, airily, till they came to Sruth na Maoile between Ireland and Alban. And that was a grief to the men of Ireland, and they gave out an order no swan was to be killed from that out, whatever chance there might be of killing one, all through Ireland.

It was a bad dwelling-place for the children of Lir they to be on Sruth na Maoile. When they saw the wide coast about them, they were filled with cold and with sorrow, and they thought nothing of all they had gone through before, in comparison to what they were going through on that sea.

Now one night while they were there a great storm came on them, and it is what Fionnuala said: "My dear brothers," she said, "it is a pity for us not to be making ready for this night, for it it certain the storm will separate us from one another. And let us," she said. "settle on some place where we can meet afterward, if we are driven from one another in the night."

"Let us settle," said the others, "to meet one another at Carraig na Ron, the Rock of the Seals, for we all have knowledge of it."

And when midnight came, the wind came on them with it, and the noise of the waves increased, and the lightning was flashing, and a rough storm came sweeping down; the way the children of Lir were scattered over the great sea, and the wideness of it set them astray, so that no one of them could know what way the others went. But after that storm a great quiet came on the sea, and Fionnuala was alone on Sruth na Maoile; and when she took notice that her brothers were wanting she was lamenting after them greatly, and she made this complaint:

"It is a pity for me to be alive in the state I am; it is frozen to my sides my wings are; it is little that the wind has not broken my heart in my body, with the loss of Aodh.

"To be three hundred years on Loch Dairbhreach without going into my own shape, it is worse to me the time I am on Sruth na Maoile.

"The three I loved, Och! the three I loved, that slept under the shelter of my feathers; till the dead come back to the living I will see them no more for ever.

"It is a pity I to stay after Fiachra, and after Aodh,

and after comely Conn, and with no account of them; my grief I to be here to face every hardship this night."

She stopped all night there upon the Rock of the Seals until the rising of the sun, looking out over the sea on every side till at last she saw Conn coming to her, his feathers wet through and his head hanging, and her heart gave him a great welcome; and then Fiachra came wet and perished and worn out, and he could not say a word they could understand with the dint of the cold and the hardship he had gone through. And Fionnuala put him under her wings, and she said: "We would be well off now if Aodh would but come to us."

It was not long after that, they saw Aodh coming, his head dry and his feathers beautiful, and Fionnuala gave him a great welcome, and she put him in under the feathers of her breast, and Fiachra under her right wing and Conn under her left wing, the way she could put her feathers over them all. "And Och! my brothers," she said, "this was a bad night to us, and it is many of its like are before us from this out."

They stayed there a long time after that, suffering cold and misery on the Maoil, till at last a night came on them they had never known the like of before, for frost and snow and wind and cold. And they were crying and lamenting the hardship of their life, and the cold of the night and the greatness of the snow and the hardness of the wind. And after they had suffered cold to the end of a year, a worse night again came on them, in the middle of winter. And they were on Carraig na Ron, and the water froze about them, and as they rested on the rock, their feet and their wings and their feathers froze to the rock, the way they were not able to move from it. And they made such a hard struggle to get away, that

they left the skin of their feet and their feathers and the tops of their wings on the rock after them.

"My grief, children of Lir," said Fionnuala, "it is bad our state is now, for we cannot bear the salt water to touch us, and there are bonds on us not to leave it; and if the salt water goes into our sores," she said, "we will get our death." And she made this complaint:

"It is keening we are to-night; without feathers to cover our bodies; it is cold the rough, uneven rocks are under our bare feet.

"It is bad our stepmother was to us the time she played enchantments on us, sending us out like swans upon the sea.

"Our washing place is on the ridge of the bay, in the foam of flying manes of the sea; our share of the ale feast is the salt water of the blue tide.

"One daughter and three sons; it is in the clefts of the rocks we are; it is on the hard rocks we are, it is a pity the way we are."

However, they came on to the course of the Maoil again, and the salt water was sharp and rough and bitter to them, but if it was itself, they were not able to avoid it or to get shelter from it. And they were there by the shore under that hardship till such time as their feathers grew again, and their wings, and till their sores were entirely healed. And then they used to go every day to the shore of Ireland or of Alhan, but they had to come back to Sruth na Maoile every night.

Now they came one day to the mouth of the Banna, to the north of Ireland, and they saw a troop of riders, beautiful, of the one colour, with well-trained pure white horses under them, and they travelling the road straight from the Southwest.

"Do you know who those riders are, sons of Lir?" said Fionnuala.

"We do not," they said; "but it is likely they might be some troop of the Sons of the Gael, or of the Tuatha de Danaan."

They moved over closer to the shore then, that they might know who they were, and when the riders saw them they came to meet them until they were able to hold talk together.

And the chief men among them were two sons of Bodb Dearg, Aodh Aithfhiosach, of the quick wits, and Fergus Fithchiollach, of the chess, and a third part of the Riders of the Sidhe along with them, and it was for the swans they had been looking for a long while before that, and when they came together they wished one another a kind and loving welcome.

And the children of Lir asked for news of all the men of Dea, and above all of Lir, and Bodb Dearg and their people.

"They are well, and they are in the one place together," said they, "in your father's house at Sidhe Fionnachaidh, using the Feast of Age pleasantly and happily, and with no uneasiness on them, only for being without yourselves, and without knowledge of what happened you from the day you left Loch Dairbhreach."

"That has not been the way with us," said Fionnuala, "for we have gone through great hardship and uneasiness and misery on the tides of the sea until this day."

And she made this complaint:

"There is delight to-night with the household of Lir! Plenty of ale with them and of wine, although it is in a cold dwelling-place this night are the four children of the King.

"It is without a spot our bedclothes are, our bodies covered over with curved feathers; but it is often we were dressed in purple, and we drinking pleasant mead.

"It is what our food is and our drink, the white sand and the bitter water of the sea; it is often we drank mead of hazel nuts from round four-lipped drinking cups.

"It is what our beds are, bare rocks out of the power of the waves; it is often there used to be spread out for us beds of the breast feathers of birds.

"Though it is our work now to be swimming through the frost and through the noise of the waves, it is often a company of the sons of kings were riding after us to the Hill of Bodb.

"It is what wasted my strength, to be going and coming over the current of the Maoil the way I never was used to, and never to be in the sunshine on the soft grass.

"Fiachra's bed and Conn's bed is to come under the cover of my wings on the sea. Aodh has his place under the feathers of my breast, the four of us side by side.

"The teaching of Manannan without deceit, the talk of Bodb Dearg on the pleasant ridge; the voice of Angus, his sweet kisses; it is by their side I used to be without grief."

After that the riders went on to Lir's house, and they told the chief men of the Tuatha de Danaan all the birds had gone through, and the state they were in. "We have no power over them," the chief men said, "but we are glad they are living yet, for they will get help in the end of time."

As to the children of Lir, they went back toward their old place in the Maoil, and they stopped there till the time they had to spend in it, was spent. And then Fionnuala said: "The time is come for us to leave this

place. And it is to Irrus Domnann we must go now," she said, "after our three hundred years here. And indeed there will be no rest for us there, or any standing ground, or any shelter from the storms. But since it is time for us to go, let us set out on the cold wind, the way we will not go astray."

So they set out in that way, and left Sruth na Maoile behind them, and went to the point of Irrus Domnann, and there they stopped, and it is a life of misery and a cold life they led there. And one time the sea froze about them that they could not move at all, and the brothers were lamenting, and Fionnuala was comforting them, for she knew there would help come to them in the end.

And they stayed at Irrus Domnann till the time they had to spend there was spent. And then Fionnuala said: "The time is come for us to go back to Sidhe Fionnachaidh, where our father is with his household and with all our own people."

"It pleases us well to hear that," they said.

So they set out flying through the air lightly till they came to Sidhe Fionnachaidh; and it is how they found the place, empty before them, and nothing in it but green hillocks and thickets of nettles, without a house, without a fire, without a hearthstone. And the four pressed close to one another then, and they gave out three sorrowful cries, and Fionnuala made this complaint:

"It is a wonder to me this place is, and it without a house, without a dwelling-place. To see it the way it is now, Ochone! it is bitterness to my heart.

"Without dogs, without hounds for hunting, without women, without great kings; we never knew it to be like this when our father was in it.

"Without horns, without cups, without drinking in the

lighted house; without young men, without riders; the way it is to-night is a foretelling of sorrow.

"The people of the place to be as they are now, Ochone! it is grief to my heart! It is plain to my mind to-night the lord of the house is not living.

"Och, house where we used to see music and playing and the gathering of people! I think it is a great change to see it lonely the way it is to-night.

"The greatness of the hardships we have gone through going from one wave to another of the sea, we never heard of the like of them coming on any other person.

"It is seldom this place had its part with grass and bushes; the man is not living that would know us, it would be a wonder to him to see us here."

However, the children of Lir stopped that night in their father's place and their grandfather's, where they had been reared, and they were singing very sweet music of the Sidhe. And they rose up early on the morning of the morrow and went to Inis Gluarie, and all the birds of the country gathered near them on Loch na-n Ean, the Lake of the Birds. And they used to go out to feed every day to the far parts of the country, to Inis Geadh and to Accuill, the place Donn, son of Miled, and his people that were drowned were buried, and to all the western islands of Connacht, and they used to go back to Inis Gluaire every night.

It was about that time it happened them to meet with a young man of good race, and his name was Aibric; and he often took notice of the birds, and their singing was sweet to him and he loved them greatly, and they loved him. And it is this young man that told the whole story of all that had happened them, and put it in order.

And the story he told of what happened them in the end is this.

It was after the faith of Christ and blessed Patrick came into Ireland, that Saint Mochaomhog came to Inis Gluaire. And the first night he came to the island, the children of Lir heard the voice of his bell, ringing near them. And the brothers started up with fright when they heard it. "We do not know," they said, "what is that weak, unpleasing voice we hear."

"That is the voice of the bell of Mochaomhog," said Fionnuala; "and it is through that bell," she said, "you will be set free from pain and from misery."

They listened to that music of the bell till the matins were done, and then they began to sing the low, sweet music of the Sidhe.

And Mochaomhog was listening to them, and he prayed to God to show him who was singing that music, and it was showed to him that the children of Lir were singing it. And on the morning of the morrow he went forward to the Lake of the Birds, and he saw the swans before him on the lake, and he went down to them at the brink of the shore. "Are you the children of Lir?" he said.

"We are indeed," said they.

"I give thanks to God for that," said he, "for it is for your sakes I am come to this island beyond any other island, and let you come to land now," he said, "and give your trust to me, that you may do good deeds and part from your sins."

They came to the land after that, and they put trust in Mochaomhog, and he brought them to his own dwelling-place, and they used to be hearing Mass with him. And he got a good smith and bade him make chains of bright silver for them, and he put a chain between Aodh and

Fionnuala, and a chain between Conn and Fachra. And the four of them were raising his heart and gladdening his mind, and no danger and no distress that was on the swans before put any trouble on them now.

Now the king of Connacht at that time was Lairgnen, son of Colman, son of Colman, son of Cobthach, and Deoch, daughter of Finghin, was his wife. And that was the coming together of the Man from the North and the Woman from the South, that Aoife had spoken of.

And the woman heard talk of the birds, and a great desire came on her to get them, and she bade Lairgnen to bring them to her, and he said he would ask them of Mochaomhog.

And she gave her word she would not stop another night with him unless he would bring them to her. And she set out from the house there and then. And Lairgnen sent messengers after her to bring her back, and they did not overtake her till she was at Cill Dun. She went back home with them then, and Lairgnen sent messengers to ask the birds of Mochaomhog, and he did not get them.

There was great anger on Lairgnen then, and he went himself to the place Mochaomhog was, and he asked was it true he had refused him the birds. "It is true indeed," said he. At that Lairgnen rose up, and he took hold of the swans, and pulled them off the altar, two birds in each hand, to bring them away to Deoch. But no sooner had he laid his hand on them than their bird skins fell off, and what was in their place was three lean, withered old men and a thin withered old woman, without blood or flesh.

And Lairgnen gave a great start at that, and he went out from the place. It is then Fionnuala said to Mochaomhog: "Come and baptise us now, for it is short

till our death comes; and it is certain you do not think worse of parting with us than we do of parting with you. And make our grave afterward," she said, "and lay Conn on my right side and Fiachra on my left side, and Aodh before my face, between my two arms. And pray to the God of Heaven," she said, "that you may he able to baptise us."

The children of Lir were baptised then, and they died and were buried as Fionnuala had desired; Fiachra and Conn one at each side of her, and Aohd before her face. And a stone was put over them, and their names were written in Ogham, and they were keened there, and heaven was gained for their souls.

And that is the fate of the children of Lir.

CHAPTER X

THE BELEAGUERED CITY

I HAVE read, in some old marvellous tale
Some legend strange and vague,
That a midnight host of spectres pale
Beleaguered the walls of Prague.

Beside the Moldau's rushing stream,
With the wan moon overhead,
There stood, as in an awful dream,
The army of the dead.

White as a sea-fog, landward bound,
The spectral camp was seen,
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound,
The river flowed between.

No other voice nor sound was there,
No drum, nor sentry's pace;
The mist-like banners clasped the air,
As clouds with clouds embrace.

But, when the old cathedral bell
Proclaimed the morning prayer,
The white pavilions rose and fell
On the alarmed air.

Down the broad valley fast and far
The troubled army fled;
Up rose the glorious morning star,
The ghastly host was dead.

I have read, in the marvellous heart of man,
That strange and mystic scroll,
That an army of phantoms vast and wan
Beleaguer the human soul.

Encamped beside Life's rushing stream,
In Fancy's misty light,
Gigantic shapes and shadows gleam
Portentous through the night.

Upon its midnight battle-ground
The spectral camp is seen,
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound,
Flows the River of Life between.

No other voice, nor sound is there,
In the army of the grave;
No other challenge breaks the air,
But the rushing of Life's wave.

And, when the solemn and deep church-bell
Entreats the soul to pray,
The midnight phantoms feel the spell
The shadows sweep away.

Down the broad Vale of Tears afar
The spectral camp is fled;
Faith shineth as a morning star,
Our ghastly fears are dead.

CHAPTER XI

PRESTER JOHN

ABOUT the middle of the twelfth century, a rumour circulated through Europe that there reigned in Asia a powerful Christian Emperor, Presbyter Johannes. In a bloody fight he had broken the power of the Mussulmans, and was ready to come to the assistance of the Crusaders. Great was the exultation in Europe, for of late the news from the East had been gloomy and depressing, the power of the infidel had increased, overwhelming masses of men had been brought into the field against the chivalry of Christendom, and it was felt that the cross must yield before the odious crescent.

The news of the success of the Priest-King opened a door of hope to the desponding Christian world. Pope Alexander III. determined at once to effect a union with this mysterious personage, and on the 27th of September, 1177, wrote him a letter, which he intrusted to his physician, Philip, to deliver in person.

Philip started on his embassy, but never returned. The conquests of Tschengis-Khan again attracted the eyes of Christian Europe to the East. The Mongol hordes were rushing in upon the West with devastating ferocity; Russia, Poland, Hungary, and the Eastern provinces of Germany had succumbed, or suffered grievously; and the fears of other nations were roused lest they too should taste the misery of a Mongolian invasion. It was Gog and Magog come to slaughter, and

the times of Antichrist were dawning. But the battle of Liegnitz stayed them in their onward career, and Europe was saved.

Pope Innocent IV. determined to convert these wild hordes of barbarians, and subject them to the cross of Christ; he therefore sent among them a number of Dominican and Franciscan missioners, and embassies of peace passed between the Pope, the King of France, and the Mogul Khan.

The result of these communications with the East was, that the travellers learned how false were the prevalent notions of a mighty Christian empire existing in Central Asia. Vulgar superstition or conviction is not, however, to be upset by evidence, and the locality of the monarchy was merely transferred by the people to Africa, and they fixed upon Abyssinia, with a show of truth, as the seat of the famous Priest-King. However, still some doubted. John de Plano Carpini and Marco Polo, though they acknowledged the existence of a Christian monarch in Abyssinia, yet stoutly maintained as well that Prester John of popular belief reigned in splendour somewhere in the dim Orient.

But before proceeding with the history of this strange fable, it will be well to extract the different accounts given of the Priest-King and his realm by early writers; and we shall then be better able to judge of the influence the myth obtained in Europe.

Otto of Freisingen is the first author to mention the monarchy of Prester John, with whom we are acquainted. Otto wrote a chronicle up to the date 1156, and he relates that in 1145 the Catholic Bishop of Cabala visited Europe to lay certain complaints before the Pope. He mentioned the fall of Edessa, and also "he stated that a few

years ago a certain King and Priest called John, who lives on the farther side of Persia and Armenia, in the remote East, and who, with all his people, were Christians, though belonging to the Nestorian Church, had overcome the royal brothers Samiardi, kings of the Medes and Persians, and had captured Ecbatana, their capital and residence. The said kings had met with their Persian, Median, and Assyrian troops, and had fought for three consecutive days, each side having determined to die rather than take to flight. Prester John, for so they are wont to call him, at length routed the Persians, and after a bloody battle, remained victorious. After which victory the said John was hastening to the assistance of the Church at Jerusalem, but his host, on reaching the Tigris, was hindered from passing, through a deficiency in boats, and he directed his march North, since he had heard that the river was there covered with ice. In that place he had waited many years, expecting severe cold; but the winters having proved unpropitious, and the severity of the climate having carried off many soldiers, he had been forced to retreat to his own land. This king belongs to the family of the Magi, mentioned in the Gospel, and he rules over the very people formerly governed by the Magi; moreover, his fame and his wealth are so great, that he uses an emerald sceptre only.

"Excited by the example of his ancestors, who came to worship Christ in his cradle, he had proposed to go to Jerusalem, but had been impeded by the above-mentioned causes."

At the same time the story crops up in other quarters; so that we cannot look upon Otto as the inventor of the myth. The celebrated Maimonides alludes to it in a passage quoted by Joshua Lorki, a Jewish physician to

Benedict XIII. Maimonides lived from 1135 to 1204. The passage is as follows: "It is evident both from the letters of Rambam (Maimonides), whose memory be blessed, and from the narration of merchants who have visited the ends of the earth, that at this time the root of our faith is to be found in the lands of Babel and Teman, where long ago Jerusalem was an exile; not reckoning those who live in the land of Paras and Madai, of the exiles of Schomrom, the number of which people is as the sand: of these some are still under the yoke of Paras, who is called the Great-Chief Sultan by the Arabs; others live in a place under the yoke of a strange people . . . governed by a Christian chief, Preste-Cuan by name. With him they have made a compact, and he with them; and this is a matter concerning which there can be no manner of doubt."

Benjamin of Tudela, another Jew, travelled in the East between the years 1159 and 1173, the last being the date of his death. He wrote an account of his travels, and gives in it some information with regard to a mythical Jew king, who reigned in the utmost splendour over a realm inhabited by Jews alone, situate somewhere in the midst of a desert of vast extent. About this period there appeared a document which produced intense excitement throughout Europe—a letter, yes! a letter from the mysterious personage himself to Manuel Comnenus, Emperor of Constantinople (1143–1180). The exact date of this extraordinary epistle cannot be fixed with any certainty, but it certainly appeared before 1241, the date of the conclusion of the chronicle of Albericus Trium Fontium. This Albericus relates that in the year 1165 "Presbyter Johannes, the Indian king, sent his wonderful letter to various Christian princes, and especially to

Manuel of Constantinople, and Frederic the Roman Emperor." Similar letters were sent to Alexander III., to Louis VII. of France, and to the King of Portugal, which are alluded to in chronicles and romances, and which were indeed turned into rhyme, and sung all over Europe by minstrels and trouvères. The letter is as follows:

"John, Priest by the Almighty power of God and the Might of our Lord Jesus Christ, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, to his friend Emanuel, Prince of Constantinople, greeting, wishing him health, prosperity, and the continuance of Divine favour.

"Our Majesty has been informed that you hold our Excellency in love, and that the report of our greatness has reached you. Moreover, we have heard through our treasurer that you have been pleased to send to us some objects of art and interest, that our Exaltedness might be gratified thereby.

"Being human, I receive it in good part, and we have ordered our treasurer to send you some of our articles in return.

"Now we desire to be made certain that you hold the right faith, and in all things cleave to Jesus Christ, our Lord, for we have heard that your court regard you as a god, though we know that you are mortal, and subject to human infirmities. . . . Should you desire to learn the greatness and excellency of our Exaltedness and of the land subject to our sceptre, then hear and believe: I, Presbyter Johannes, the Lord of Lords, surpass all under heaven in virtue, in riches, and in power; seventy-two kings pay us tribute. . . . In the three Indies our Magnificence rules, and our land extends beyond India, where rests the body of the holy Apostle Thomas; it

reaches toward the sunrise over the wastes, and it trends toward deserted Babylon near the tower of Babel. Seventy-two provinces, of which only a few are Christian, serve us. Each has its own king, but all are tributary to us.

"Our land is the home of elephants, dromedaries, camels, crocodiles, meta-collinarum, cametennus, tensevetes, wild asses, white and red lions, white bears, white merules, crickets, griffins, tigers, lamias, hyenas, wild horses, wild oxen and wild men, men with horns, one-eyed, men with eyes before and behind, centaurs, fauns, satyrs, pygmies, forty-ell-high giants, Cyclopses, and similar women; it is the home, too, of the phœnix, and of nearly all living animals. We have some people subject to us who feed on the flesh of men and of prematurely born animals, and who never fear death. When any of these people die, their friends and relations eat them ravenously, for they regard it as a main duty to munch human flesh. Their names are Gog and Magog, Anie, Agit, Azenach, Fommeperi, Befari, Conei-Samante, Agrimandri, Vintefolei, Casbei, Alanei. These and similar nations were shut in behind lofty mountains by Alexander the Great, toward the North. We lead them at our pleasure against our foes, and neither man nor beast is left undevoured, if our Majesty gives the requisite permission. And when all our foes are eaten, then we return with our hosts home again. These accursed fifteen nations will burst forth from the four quarters of the earth at the end of the world, in the times of Antichrist, and overrun all the abodes of the Saints as well as the great city Rome, which, by the way, we are prepared to give to our son who will be born, along with all Italy, Germany, the two Gauls, Britain and Scotland. We shall

also give him Spain and all the land as far as the icy sea. The nations to which I have alluded, according to the words of the prophet, shall not stand in the judgment, on account of their offensive practices, but will be consumed to ashes by a fire which will fall on them from heaven.

"Our land streams with honey, and is overflowing with milk. In one region grows no poisonous herb, nor does a querulous frog ever quack in it; no scorpion exists, nor does the serpent glide amongst the grass, nor can any poisonous animals exist in it, or injure any one.

"Among the heathen, flows through a certain province the River Indus; encircling Paradise, it spreads its arms in manifold windings through the entire province. Here are found the emeralds, sapphires, carbuncles, topazes, chrysolites, onyxes, beryls, sardius, and other costly stones. Here grows the plant Assidos, which, when worn by any one, protects him from the evil spirit, forcing it to state its business and name; consequently the foul spirits keep out of the way there. In a certain land subject to us, all kinds of pepper is gathered, and is exchanged for corn and bread, leather and cloth. . . . At the foot of Mount Olympus bubbles up a spring which changes its flavour hour by hour, night and day, and the spring is scarcely three days' journey from Paradise, out of which Adam was driven. If any one has tasted thrice of the fountain, from that day he will feel no fatigue, but will, as long as he lives, be as a man of thirty years. Here are found the small stones called Nudiosi, which, if borne about the body, prevent the sight from waxing feeble, and restore it where it is lost. The more the stone is looked at, the keener becomes the sight. In our territory is a certain waterless sea, consisting of tumbling

billows of sand never at rest. None have crossed this sea; it lacks water altogether, yet fish are cast up upon the beach of various kinds, very tasty, and the like are nowhere else to be seen. Three days' journey from this sea are mountains from which rolls down a stony, waterless river, which opens into the sandy sea. As soon as the stream reaches the sea, its stones vanish in it, and are never seen again. As long as the river is in motion, it cannot be crossed; only four days a week is it possible to traverse it. Between the sandy sea and the said mountains, in a certain plain is a fountain of singular virtue, which purges Christians and would-be Christians from all transgressions. The water stands four inches high in a hollow stone shaped like a musselshell. Two saintly old men watch by it, and ask the comers whether they are Christians, or are about to become Christians, then whether they desire healing with all their hearts. If they have answered well, they are bidden to lay aside their clothes, and to step into the mussel. If what they said be true, then the water begins to rise and gush over their heads; thrice does the water thus lift itself, and every one who has entered the mussel leaves it cured of every complaint.

"Near the wilderness trickles between barren mountains a subterranean rill, which can only by chance be reached, for only occasionally the earth gapes, and he who would descend must do it with precipitation, ere the earth closes again. All that is gathered under the ground there is gem and precious stone. The brook pours into another river, and the inhabitants of the neighbourhood obtain thence abundance of precious stones. Yet they never venture to sell them without having first offered them to us for our private use: should we decline them,

they are at liberty to dispose of them to strangers. Boys there are trained to remain three or four days under water, diving after the stones.

"Beyond the stone river are the ten tribes of the Jews, which, though subject to their own kings, are, for all that, our slaves and tributary to our Majesty. In one of our lands, hight Zone, are worms called in our tongue Salamanders. These worms can only live in fire, and they build cocoons like silk-worms, which are unwound by the ladies of our palace, and spun into cloth and dresses, which are worn by our Exaltedness. These dresses, in order to be cleaned and washed, are cast into flames. . . . When we go to war, we have fourteen golden and bejewelled crosses borne before us instead of banners; each of these crosses is followed by 10,000 horsemen, and 100,000 foot soldiers fully armed, without reckoning those in charge of the luggage and provision.

"When we ride abroad plainly, we have a wooden, unadorned cross, without gold or gem about it, borne before us, in order that we may meditate on the sufferings of Our Lord Jesus Christ; also a golden bowl filled with earth, to remind us of that whence we sprung, and that to which we must return; but besides these there is borne a silver bowl full of gold, as a token to all that we are the Lord of Lords.

"All riches, such as are upon the world, our Magnificence possesses in superabundance. With us no one lies, for he who speaks a lie is thenceforth regarded as dead; he is no more thought of, or honoured by us. No vice is tolerated by us. Every year we undertake a pilgrimage, with retinue of war, to the body of the holy prophet Daniel, which is near the desolated site of Babylon. In our realm fishes are caught, the blood of which

dyes purple. The Amazons and the Brahmins are subject to us. The palace in which our Super-eminency resides, is built after the pattern of the castle built by the Apostle Thomas for the Indian king Gundoforus. Ceilings, joists, and architrave are of Sethym wood, the roof of ebony, which can never catch fire. Over the gable of the palace are, at the extremities, two golden apples, in each of which are two carbuncles, so that the gold may shine by day, and the carbuncles by night. The greater gates of the palace are of sardius, with the horn of the horned snake inwrought, so that no one can bring poison within.

"The other portals are of ebony. The windows are of crystal; the tables are partly of gold, partly of amethyst, and the columns supporting the tables are partly of ivory, partly of amethyst. The court in which we watch the jousting is floored with onyx in order to increase the courage of the combatants. In the palace, at night, nothing is burned for light but wicks supplied with balsam. . . . Before our palace stands a mirror, the ascent to which consists of five and twenty steps of porphyry and serpentine." After a description of the gems adorning this mirror, which is guarded night and day by three thousand armed men, he explains its use: "We look therein and behold all that is taking place in every province and region subject to our sceptre.

"Seven kings wait upon us monthly, in turn, with sixty-two dukes, two hundred and fifty-six counts and marquises: and twelve archbishops sit at table with us on our right, and twenty bishops on the left, besides the patriarch of St. Thomas, the Sarmatian Protopope, and the Archpope of Susa. . . . Our lord high steward is a primate and king, our cup-bearer is an archbishop and king, our chamberlain a bishop and king, our marshal king and abbot."

CHAPTER XII

THE WANDERING JEW

THE year 1228, "a certain Archbishop of Armenia the Greater came on a pilgrimage to England to see the relics of the saints, and visit the sacred places in the kingdom, as he had done in others; he also produced letters of recommendation from his Holiness the Pope, to the religious and the prelates of the churches, in which they were enjoined to receive and entertain him with due reverence and honour. On his arrival, he came to St. Albans, where he was received with all respect by the abbot and the monks; and at this place, being fatigued with his journey, he remained some days to rest himself and his followers, and a conversation took place between him and the inhabitants of the convent, by means of their interpreters, during which he made many inquiries relating to the religion and religious observances of this country, and told many strange things concerning the countries of the East. In the course of conversation he was asked whether he had ever seen or heard any thing of Joseph, a man of whom there was much talk in the world, who, when our Lord suffered, was present and spoke to Him, and who is still alive, in evidence of the Christian faith: in reply to which, a knight in his retinue, who was his interpreter, replied, speaking in French, 'My lord well knows that man, and a little before he took his way to the western countries, the said Joseph ate at the table of my

lord the Archbishop of Armenia, and he has often seen and conversed with him.'

"He was then asked about what had passed between Christ and the said Joseph; to which he replied, 'At the time of the passion of Jesus Christ, He was seized by the Jews, and led into the hall of judgment before Pilate, the governor, that He might be judged by him on the accusation of the Jews; and Pilate, finding no fault for which he might sentence Him to death, said unto them, "Take Him and judge Him according to your law"; the shouts of the Jews, however, increasing, he, at their request, released unto them Barabbas, and delivered Jesus to them to be crucified. When, therefore, the Jews were dragging Jesus forth, and had reached the door, Cartaphilus, a porter of the hall in Pilate's service, as Jesus was going out of the door, impiously struck Him on the back with his hand, and said in mockery, "Go quicker, Jesus, go quicker; why do you loiter?" and Jesus, looking back on him with a severe countenance, said to him, "I am going, and you shall wait till I return." And according as our Lord said, this Cartaphilus is still awaiting His return. At the time of our Lord's suffering he was thirty years old, and when he attains the age of a hundred years, he always returns to the same age as he was when our Lord suffered. After Christ's death, when the Catholic faith gained ground, this Cartaphilus was baptised by Ananias (who also baptised the Apostle Paul), and was called Joseph. He dwells in one or other divisions of Armenia, and in divers Eastern countries, passing his time amongst the bishops and other prelates of the Church; he is a man of holy conversation, and religious; a man of few words, and very circumspect in his behaviour; for he does not speak at all unless when

questioned by the bishops and religious; and then he relates the events of olden times, and speaks of things which occurred at the suffering and resurrection of our Lord, and of the witnesses of the resurrection, namely, of those who rose with Christ, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto men. He also tells of the creed of the Apostles, and of their separation and preaching. And all this he relates without smiling, or levity of conversation, as one who is well practised in sorrow and the fear of God, always looking forward with dread to the coming of Jesus Christ, lest at the Last Judgment he should find Him in anger whom, when on His way to death, he had provoked to just vengeance. Numbers came to him from different parts of the world, enjoying his society and conversation; and to them, if they are men of authority, he explains all doubts on the matters on which he is questioned. He refuses all gifts that are offered him, being content with slight food and clothing.'"

Much about the same date, Philip Mouskes, afterward Bishop of Tournay, wrote his rhymed chronicle (1242), which contains a similar account of the Jew, derived from the same Armenian prelate:

> "Adonques vint un arceveskes
> De ça mer, plains de bonnes tèques
> Par samblant, et fut d'Armenie,"

and this man, having visited the shrine of "St. Tumas de Kantobire," and then having paid his devotions at "Monsigour St. Jake," he went on to Cologne to see the heads of the three kings. The version told in the Netherlands much resembled that related at St. Albans, only that the Jew, seeing the people dragging Christ to his death, exclaims:

"Atendés moi! g'i vois,
S'iert mis le faus profète en crois."

Then

"Le vrais Dieux se regarda,
Et li a dit qu'e n'i tarda,
Icist ne t'atenderont pas,
Mais saces, tu m'atenderas."

We hear no more of the wandering Jew till the sixteenth century, when we hear first of him in a casual manner, as assisting a weaver, Kokot, at the royal palace in Bohemia (1505), to find a treasure which had been secreted by the great-grandfather of Kokot, sixty years before, at which time the Jew was present. He then had the appearance of being a man of seventy years.

Curiously enough, we next hear of him in the East, where he is confounded with the prophet Elijah. Early in the century he appeared to Fadhilah, under peculiar circumstances.

After the Arabs had captured the city of Elvan, Fadhilah, at the head of three hundred horsemen, pitched his tents, late in the evening, between two mountains. Fadhilah, having begun his evening prayer with a loud voice, heard the words "Allah akbar" (God is great) repeated distinctly, and each word of his prayer was followed in a similar manner. Fadhilah, not believing this to be the result of an echo, was much astonished, and cried out, "O thou! whether thou art of the angel ranks, or whether thou art of some other order of spirits, it is well; the power of God be with thee; but if thou art a man, then let mine eyes light upon thee, that I may rejoice in thy presence and society." Scarcely had he spoken these words, before an aged man, with bald head, stood before him,

holding a staff in his hand, and much resembling a dervish in appearance. After having courteously saluted him, Fadhilah asked the old man who he was. Thereupon the stranger answered, "Bassi Hadhret Issa, I am here by command of the Lord Jesus, who has left me in this world, that I may live therein until he come a second time to earth. I wait for this Lord, who is the Fountain of Happiness, and in obedience to his command I dwell behind yon mountain." When Fadhilah heard these words, he asked when the Lord Jesus would appear; and the old man replied that his appearing would be at the end of the world, at the Last Judgment. But this only increased Fadhilah's curiosity, so that he inquired the signs of the approach of the end of all things, whereupon Zerib Bar Elia gave him an account of general, social, and moral dissolution, which would be the climax of this world's history.

In 1547 he was seen in Europe, if we are to believe the following narration:

"Paul von Eitzen, Doctor of the Holy Scriptures, and Bishop of Schleswig,* related as true for some years past, that when he was young, having studied at Wittemberg, he returned home to his parents in Hamburg in the winter of the year 1547, and that on the following Sunday, in church, he observed a tall man, with his hair hanging over his shoulders, standing barefoot, during the sermon, over against the pulpit, listening with deepest attention to the discourse, and, whenever the name of Jesus was mentioned, bowing himself profoundly and humbly, with sighs and beating of the breast. He had no other clothing, in the bitter cold of the winter, except a pair of hose

*Paul v. Eitzen was born January 25, 1522, at Hamburg; in 1562 he was appointed chief preacher for Schleswig, and died February 25, 1598.

which were in tatters about his feet, and a coat with a girdle which reached to his feet; and his general appearance was that of a man of fifty years. And many people, some of high degree and title, have seen this same man in England, France, Italy, Hungary, Persia, Spain, Poland, Moscow, Lapland, Sweden, Denmark, Scotland, and other places.

"Every one wondered over the man. Now, after the sermon, the said Doctor inquired diligently where the stranger was to be found; and when he had sought him out, he inquired of him privately whence he came, and how long that winter he had been in the place. Thereupon he replied, modestly, that he was a Jew by birth, a native of Jerusalem, by name Ahasverus, by trade a shoemaker; he had been present at the crucifixion of Christ, and had lived ever since, travelling through various lands and cities, the which he substantiated by accounts he gave; he related also the circumstances of Christ's transference from Pilate to Herod, and the final crucifixion, together with other details not recorded in the Evangelists and historians; he gave accounts of the changes of government in many countries, especially of the East, through several centuries; and moreover he detailed the labours and deaths of the holy Apostles of Christ most circumstantially.

"Now when Doctor Paul v. Eitzen heard this with profound astonishment, on account of its incredible novelty, he inquired further, in order that he might obtain more accurate information. Then the man answered, that he had lived in Jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion of Christ, whom he had regarded as a deceiver of the people, and a heretic; he had seen Him with his own eyes, and had done his best, along with others, to bring

this deceiver, as he regarded Him, to justice, and to have Him put out of the way. When the sentence had been pronounced by Pilate, Christ was about to be dragged past his house; then he ran home, and called together his household to have a look at Christ, and see what sort of a person He was.

"This having been done, he had his little child on his arm, and was standing in his doorway, to have a sight of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"As, then, Christ was led by, bowed under the weight of the heavy cross, He tried to rest a little, and stood still a moment; but the shoemaker, in zeal and rage, and for the sake of obtaining credit among the other Jews, drove the Lord Christ forward, and told Him to hasten on His way. Jesus, obeying, looked at him, and said, 'I shall stand and rest, but thou shalt go till the last day.' At these words the man set down the child; and, unable to remain where he was, he followed Christ, and saw how cruelly He was crucified, how He suffered, how He died. As soon as this had taken place, it came upon him suddenly that he could no more return to Jerusalem, nor see again his wife and child, but must go forth into foreign lands, one after another, like a mournful pilgrim. Now, when, years after, he returned to Jerusalem, he found it ruined and utterly razed, so that not one stone was left standing on another; and he could not recognise former localities.

"He believes that it is God's purpose, in thus driving him about in miserable life, and preserving him undying, to present him before the Jews at the end, as a living token, so that the godless and unbelieving may remember the death of Christ, and be turned to repentance. For his part he would well rejoice were God in heaven to re-

lease him from this vale of tears. After this conversation, Doctor Paul v. Eitzen, along with the rector of the school of Hamburg, who was well read in history, and a traveller, questioned him about events which had taken place in the East since the death of Christ, and he was able to give them much information on many ancient matters; so that it was impossible not to be convinced of the truth of his story, and to see that what seems impossible with men is, after all, possible with God.

"Since the Jew has had his life extended, he has become silent and reserved, and only answers direct questions. When invited to become any one's guest, he eats little, and drinks in great moderation; then hurries on, never remaining long in one place. When at Hamburg, Dantzig, and elsewhere, money has been offered him, he never took more than two skillings (fourpence, one farthing), and at once distributed it to the poor, as token that he needed no money, for God would provide for him, as he rued the sins he had committed in ignorance.

"During the period of his stay in Hamburg and Dantzig he was never seen to laugh. In whatever land he travelled he spoke its language, and when he spoke Saxon, it was like a native Saxon. Many people came from different places to Hamburg and Dantzig in order to see and hear this man, and were convinced that the providence of God was exercised in this individual in a very remarkable manner. He gladly listened to God's word, or heard it spoken of always with great gravity and compunction, and he ever reverenced with sighs the pronunciation of the name of God, or of Jesus Christ, and could not endure to hear curses; but whenever he heard any one swear by God's death or pains, he waxed indignant, and exclaimed, with vehemence and with sighs,

'Wretched man and miserable creature, thus to misuse the name of thy Lord and God, and His bitter sufferings and passion. Hadst thou seen, as I have, how heavy and bitter were the pangs and wounds of thy Lord, endured for thee and for me, thou wouldst rather undergo great pain thyself than thus take His sacred name in vain!'

"Such is the account given to me by Doctor Paul von Eitzen, with many circumstantial proofs, and corroborated by certain of my own old acquaintances who saw this same individual with their own eyes in Hamburg.

"In the year 1575 the Secretary Christopher Krause, and Master Jacob von Holstein, legates to the Court of Spain, and afterward sent into the Netherlands to pay the soldiers serving his Majesty in that country, related on their return home to Schleswig, and confirmed with solemn oaths, that they had come across the same mysterious individual at Madrid in Spain, in appearance, manner of life, habits, clothing, just the same as he had appeared in Hamburg. They said that they had spoken with him, and that many people of all classes had conversed with him, and found him to speak good Spanish. In the year 1599, in December, a reliable person wrote from Brunswick to Strasburg that the same mentioned strange person had been seen alive at Vienna in Austria, and that he had started for Poland and Dantzig; and that he purposed going on to Moscow. This Ahasverus was at Lubeck in 1601, also about the same date in Revel in Livonia, and in Cracow in Poland. In Moscow he was seen of many and spoken to by many.

"What thoughtful, God-fearing persons are to think of the said person, is at their option. God's works are wondrous and past finding out, and are manifested day

by day, only to be revealed in full at the last great day of account.

"Dated, Revel, August 1st, 1613.

"D. W.

"D.

"Chrysostomus Dudulœus,

"Westphalus."

. . . . . .

In 1604 he seems to have appeared in Paris. Rudolph Botoreus says, under this date, "I fear lest I be accused of giving ear to old wives' fables, if I insert in these pages what is reported all over Europe of the Jew, coeval with the Saviour Christ; however, nothing is more common, and our popular histories have not scrupled to assert it. Following the lead of those who wrote our annals, I may say that he who appeared not in one century only, in Spain, Italy, and Germany, was also in this year seen and recognised as the same individual who had appeared in Hamburg, anno MDLXVI. The common people, bold in spreading reports, relate many things of him; and this I allude to, lest anything should be left unsaid."

J. C. Bulenger puts the date of the Hamburg visit earlier. "It was reported at this time that a Jew of the time of Christ was wandering without food and drink, having for a thousand and odd years been a vagabond and outcast, condemned by God to rove, because he, of that generation of vipers, was the first to cry out for the crucifixion of Christ and the release of Barabbas; and also because soon after, when Christ, panting under the burden of the rood, sought to rest before his workshop (he was a cobbler), the fellow ordered Him off with acerbity. Thereupon Christ replied, 'Because thou grudg-

est Me such a moment of rest, I shall enter into My rest, but thou shalt wander restless.' At once, frantic and agitated, he fled through the whole earth, and on the same account to this day he journeys through the world. It was this person who was seen in Hamburg in MDLXIV. Credat Judæus Apella! *I* did not see him, or hear anything authentic concerning him, at that time when I was in Paris."

A curious little book, written against the quackery of Paracelsus, by Leonard Doldius, a Nurnberg physician, and translated into Latin and augmented, by Andreas Libavius, doctor and physician of Rotenburg, alludes to the same story, and gives the Jew a new name nowhere else met with. After having referred to a report that Paracelsus was not dead, but was seated alive, asleep or napping, in his sepulchre at Strasburg, preserved from death by some of his specifics, Labavius declares that he would sooner believe in the old man, the Jew, Ahasverus, wandering over the world, called by some Buttadæus, and otherwise, again, by others.

He is said to have appeared in Naumburg, but the date is not given; he was noticed in church, listening to the sermon. After the service he was questioned, and he related his story. On this occasion he received presents from the burgers. In 1633 he was again in Hamburg. In the year 1640, two citizens, living in the Gerberstrasse, in Brussels, were walking in the Sonian wood, when they encountered an aged man, whose clothes were in tatters and of an antiquated appearance. They invited him to go with them to a house of refreshment, and he went with them, but would not seat himself, remaining on foot to drink. When he came before the doors with the two burgers, he told them a great deal; but they were

mostly stories of events which had happened many hundred years before. Hence the burgers gathered that their companion was Isaac Laquedem, the Jew who had refused to permit our Blessed Lord to rest for a moment at his door-step, and they left him full of terror. In 1642 he is reported to have visited Leipzig. On the 22d July, 1721, he appeared at the gates of the city of Munich. About the end of the seventeenth century or the beginning of the eighteenth, an impostor, calling himself the Wandering Jew, attracted attention in England, and was listened to by the ignorant, and despised by the educated. He, however, managed to thrust himself into the notice of the nobility, who, half in jest, half in curiosity, questioned him, and paid him as they might a juggler. He declared that he had been an officer of the Sanhedrim, and that he had struck Christ as he left the judgment hall of Pilate. He remembered all the Apostles, and described their personal appearance, their clothes, and their peculiarities. He spoke many languages, claimed the power of healing the sick and asserted that he had travelled nearly all over the world. Those who heard him were perplexed by his familiarity with foreign tongues and places. Oxford and Cambridge sent professors to question him, and to discover the imposition, if any. An English nobleman conversed with him in Arabic. The mysterious stranger told his questioner in that language that historical works were not to he relied upon. And on being asked his opinion of Mahomet, he replied that he had been acquainted with the father of the prophet, and that he dwelt at Ormuz. As for Mahomet, he believed him to have been a man of intelligence; once when he heard the prophet deny that Christ was crucified, he answered abruptly by telling him he was a witness to the

truth of that event. He related also that he was in Rome when Nero set it on fire; he had known Saladin, Tamerlane, Bajazeth, Eterlane, and could give minute details of the history of the Crusades.

Whether this wandering Jew was found out in London or not, we cannot tell, but he shortly after appeared in Denmark, thence travelled into Sweden, and vanished.

CHAPTER XIII

KING ROBERT OF SICILY

ROBERT of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane
And Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,
Apparelled in magnificent attire,
With retinue of many a knight and squire,
On St. John's eve, at vespers, proudly sat
And heard the priests chant the Magnificat.
And as he listened, o'er and o'er again
Repeated, like a burden or refrain,
He caught the words, "*Deposuit potentes*
De sede, et exaltavit humiles";
And slowly lifting up his kingly head
He to a learned clerk beside him said,
"What mean these words?" The clerk made answer meet,
"He has put down the mighty from their seat,
And has exalted them of low degree."
Thereat King Robert muttered scornfully,
" 'T is well that such seditious words are sung
Only by priests and in the Latin tongue;
For unto priests and people be it known,
There is no power can push me from my throne!"
And leaning back, he yawned and fell asleep,
Lulled by the chant monotonous and deep.
When he awoke, it was already night;
The church was empty, and there was no light,

Save where the lamps, that glimmered few and
faint,
Lighted a little space before some saint.
He started from his seat and gazed around,
But saw no living thing and heard no sound.
He groped toward the door, but it was locked;
He cried aloud, and listened, and then knocked,
And uttered awful threatenings and complaints,
And imprecations upon men and saints.
The sounds reëchoed from the roof and walls
As if dead priests were laughing in their stalls.

At length the sexton, hearing from without
The tumult of the knocking and the shout,
And thinking thieves were in the house or prayer,
Came with his lantern, asking, "Who is there?"
Half choked with rage, King Robert fiercely said,
"Open: 't is I, the King! Art thou afraid?"
The frightened sexton, muttering, with a curse,
"This is some drunken vagabond, or worse!"
Turned the great key and flung the portal wide;
A man rushed by him at a single stride,
Haggard, half naked, without hat or cloak,
Who neither turned, nor looked at him, nor spoke,
But leaped into the blackness of the night,
And vanished like a spectre from his sight.

Robert of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane
And Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,
Despoiled of his magnificent attire,
Bareheaded, breathless, and besprent with mire,
With sense of wrong and outrage desperate,
Strode on and thundered at the palace gate;

Rushed through the courtyard, thrusting in his rage
To right and left each seneschal and page,
And hurried up the broad and sounding stair,
His white face ghastly in the torches' glare.
From hall to hall he passed with breathless speed;
Voices and cries he heard, but did not heed,
Until at last he reached the banquet-room,
Blazing with light, and breathing with perfume.

There on the dais sat another king,
Wearing his robes, his crown, his signet-ring,
King Robert's self in features, form, and height,
But all transfigured with angelic light!
It was an Angel; and his presence there
With a divine effulgence filled the air,
An exaltation, piercing the disguise,
Though none the hidden Angel recognised.

A moment speechless, motionless, amazed,
The throneless monarch on the Angel gazed,
Who met his look of anger and surprise
With the divine compassion of his eyes;
Then said, "Who art thou? and why com'st thou here?"
To which King Robert answered with a sneer,
"I am the King, and come to claim my own
From an impostor, who usurps my throne!"
And suddenly, at these audacious words,
Up sprang the angry guests, and drew their swords;
The Angel answered, with unruffled brow,
"Nay, not the King, but the King's Jester, thou

Henceforth shalt wear the bells and scalloped cape,
And for thy counsellor shalt lead an ape;
Thou shalt obey my servants when they call,
And wait upon my henchmen in the hall!"

Deaf to King Robert's threats and cries and prayers,
They thrust him from the hall and down the stairs;
A group of tittering pages ran before,
And as they opened wide the folding-door,
His heart failed, for he heard, with strange alarms,
The boisterous laughter of the men-at-arms,
And all the vaulted chamber roar and ring
With the mock plaudits of "Long live the King!"

Next morning, waking with the day's first beam,
He said within himself, "It was a dream!"
But the straw rustled as he turned his head,
There were the cap and bells beside his bed,
Around him rose the bare, discolored walls,
Close by, the steeds were champing in their stalls,
And in the corner, a revolting shape,
Shivering and chattering sat the wretched ape.
It was no dream; the world he loved so much
Had turned to dust and ashes at his touch!

Days came and went; and now returned again
To Sicily the old Saturnian reign;
Under the Angel's governance benign
The happy island danced with corn and wine,
And deep within the mountain's burning breast
Enceladus, the giant, was at rest.

Meanwhile King Robert yielded to his fate,
Sullen and silent and disconsolate.
Dressed in the motley garb that Jesters wear,
With look bewildered and a vacant stare,

Close shaven above the ears, as monks are shorn,
By courtiers mocked, by pages laughed to scorn,
His only friend the ape, his only food
What others left—he still was unsubdued.
And when the Angel met him on his way,
And half in earnest, half in jest, would say,
Sternly, though tenderly, that he might feel
The velvet scabbard held a sword of steel,
"Art thou the King?" the passion of his woe
Burst from him in resistless overflow
And, lifting high his forehead he, would fling
The haughty answer back, "I am, I am the King!"

Almost three years were ended; when there came
Ambassadors of great repute and name
From Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,
Unto King Robert, saying that Pope Urbane
By letter summoned them forthwith to come
On Holy Thursday to his city of Rome.
The Angel with great joy received his guests,
And gave them presents of embroidered vests,
And velvet mantles with rich ermine lined,
And rings and jewels of the rarest kind.
Then he departed with them o'er the sea
Into the lovely land of Italy,
Whose loveliness was more resplendent made
By the mere passing of that cavalcade,

With plumes, and cloaks, and housings, and the stir
Of jewelled bridle and of golden spur.
And lo! among the menials, in mock state,
Upon a piebald steed, with shambling gait,
His cloak of fox-tails flapping in the wind,
The solemn ape demurely perched behind,
King Robert rode, making huge merriment
In all the country towns through which they went.

The Pope received them with great pomp and blare
Of bannered trumpets, on Saint Peter's square,
Giving his benediction and embrace,
Fervent, and full of apostolic grace.
While with congratulations and with prayers
He entertained the Angel unawares,
Robert, the Jester, bursting through the crowd,
Into their presence rushed, and cried aloud,
"I am the King! Look, and behold in me
Robert, your brother, King of Sicily!
This man, who wears my semblance to your eyes,
Is an impostor in a king's disguise.
Do you not know me? does no voice within
Answer my cry, and say we are akin?"
The Pope in silence, but with troubled mien,
Gazed at the Angel's countenance serene;
The Emperor, laughing, said, "It is strange sport
To keep a madman for thy Fool at court!"
And the poor, baffled Jester in disgrace
Was hustled back among the populace.
In solemn state the Holy Week went by,
And Easter Sunday gleamed upon the sky;
The presence of the Angel, with its light,
Before the sun rose, made the city bright,

And with new fervour filled the hearts of men,
Who felt that Christ indeed had risen again.
Even the Jester, on his bed of straw,
With haggard eyes the unwonted splendour saw,
He felt within a power unfelt before,
And, kneeling humbly on his chamber-floor,
He heard the rushing garments of the Lord
Sweep through the silent air, ascending heaven-
ward.

And now the visit ending, and once more
Valmond returning to the Danube's shore,
Homeward the Angel journeyed, and again
The land was made resplendent with his train,
Flashing along the towns of Italy
Unto Salerno, and from thence by sea.
And when once more within Palermo's wall,
And, seated on the throne in his great hall,
He heard the Angelus from convent towers,
As if the better world conversed with ours,
He beckoned to King Robert to draw nigher,
And with a gesture bade the rest retire;
And when they were alone, the Angel said,
"Art thou the King?" Then, bowing down his
head,
King Robert crossed both hands upon his breast,
And meekly answered him: "Thou knowest
best!
My sins as scarlet are; let me go hence,
And in some cloister's school of penitence,
Across those stones, that pave the way to
heaven,
Walk barefoot, till my guilty soul be shriven!"

The Angel smiled, and from his radiant face
A holy light illumined all the place,
And through the open window, loud and clear,
They heard the monks chant in the chapel near,
Above the stir and tumult of the street:
"'He has put down the mighty from their seat,
And has exalted them of low degree!"
And through the chant a second melody
Rose like the throbbing of a single string:
"'I am an Angel, and thou art the King!"

King Robert, who was standing near the throne,
Lifted his eyes, and lo! he was alone!
But all apparelled as in days of old,
With ermined mantle and with cloth of gold;
And when his courtiers came, they found him there
Kneeling upon the floor, absorbed in silent prayer.

INTERLUDE

And then the blue-eyed Norseman told
A Saga of the days of old.
"There is," said he, "a wondrous book
Of Legends in the old Norse tongue,
Of the dead kings of Norroway—
Legends that once were told or sung
In many a smoky fireside nook
Of Iceland, in the ancient day,
By wandering Saga-man or Scald;
'Heimskringla' is the volume called;
And he who looks may find therein
The story that I now begin."

And in each pause the story made
Upon his violin he played,
As an appropriate interlude,
Fragments of old Norwegian tunes
That bound in one the separate runes,
And held the mind in perfect mood,
Entwining and encircling all
The strange and antiquated rhymes
With melodies of olden times;
As over some half-ruined wall,
Disjointed and about to fall,
Fresh woodbines climb and interlace,
And keep the loosened stones in place.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BEATO TORELLO DA POPPI

IN THAT time in which the portion of Tuscany called Casentino was not yet subject to the Florentines, but was ruled by its own counts, in the lands of Poppi, an important place in that valley through which runs the river Arno, and not far from its source, a son was born to a certain good man named Paolo, to whom he gave the name of Torello, and whom, when a suitable age, he not only taught to fear God, and to lead a Christian life, but sent to school, that he might learn the first principles of letters—which he soon did—and to avoid evil companions and imitate the good. The young Torello, being accustomed to this life, and his father dying, for some time proceeded from good to better.

But that not pleasing our common enemy, who always goes about seeking whom he may devour, he so tempted Torello—God permitting it, for future and greater good—that he abandoned a virtuous life, and gave himself to the pursuit of the pleasures of the world; so that instead of being praised for his blameless and religious life, he was censured by all, and had become the very opposite of what he had at first been.

But the blessed Lord—who had never abandoned him, though He had left him to wander, in order to permit him to become a true mirror of penitence—called him to himself in this manner; as he was one day wandering and

seeking amusement with his idle companions, a cock that was on a perch outside a window suddenly fell, and alighted on his shoulder, and crowed three times, and then flew back to the perch. Torello, calling to mind how the Apostle Peter had in a similar manner been made to see his guilt, awaked from his sleep of vice and sin in a state of wonder and fear; and thinking that this could have happened only by divine Providence, and to show him that he was in the power of the devil, left his companions instantly, and in penitence and tears sought the Abbot of Poppi, of the order of Vallombrosa; and commending himself to his prayers, threw himself at his feet, humbly begging for the robe of a mendicant friar, since he desired to serve God in the humblest manner. The abbot wondered much, knowing by common report Torello to be a youth of most incorrect life, to see him thus kneeling in contrition before him, and endeavoured, together with the monks, to persuade him to take their habit of St. John Gualberto. But at last, seeing he had no heart for it, and remained constant to his first request, he at last granted it; and he became a poor brother, and almost a desert hermit, for having received the benediction of the abbot, without communicating with either his family or friends, he left that country and took his way toward the most desert and savage places of the mountains, wandering among them for eight days, and passing the night wherever it chanced to overtake him. But having at last come to a great rock, near a place called Avellanato, he remained there, adopting it for a cell eight days more, weeping for his sins, praying, and imploring God to pardon him; living all this time on three small loaves, which he had brought with him, and on wild herbs like the animals; and being much pleased

with the place, he determined to make a cell under that great rock, and there spend all the days of this life, serving God with fasts, vigils, discipline, and prayers, and bitterly lamenting his past sins and evil life.

Having taken this resolution, he went to his own country to put his affairs in order; and all his relatives and friends came about him, praying him with much earnestness, if he sought to serve God, to leave this life of a wild beast and join some order, living like other monks. But all was of no avail; and selling all his goods, he gave the price to the poor, reserving to himself only a small sum of money to build a cell. And he returned to his solitude with a mason, who made for him a miserable cell under that same rock; and he bought near it enough land for a small garden, and there established himself, practising the most severe austerities.

Having now spoken of the penitence and life of the Beato Torello, we must make mention of the great gifts and grace which he received from God during his life, and which were often granted to him in behalf of those who commended themselves to him in faith and devotion.

A poor woman of Poppi, who had only one son, three years old, going to the spring to wash her clothes, took him with her; and he having strayed from her a little way while she was washing, a savage wolf seized him and carried him away, and the poor woman's shrieks could be heard almost at Poppi, while she could do nothing but commend the child to God. While the wolf was escaping with his prey between his teeth, he came, as it pleased God—who thus began to make known the reward of his service—to the cell of the Beato Torello; who, when he saw this, instantly ordered the wolf, in God's name, to lay the child on the ground, safe and sound; which com-

mand the wolf no sooner heard than he came to him immediately, and laid the child at his feet. And after he had, with evident humility, received the directions of the holy father, that neither he, nor any of the wolves his companions, should do any harm to any person of that country, he departed, and returned to the forest; and the servant of God took the half-dead child into his cell, where he made a prayer to the Lord, and he was immediately healed of the wounds the wolf's teeth had made in his throat. And when his mother came seeking him with great lamentation and sorrow, he graciously restored him to her alive and well, but with the command that while he lived she should never reveal this miracle.

Carlo, Count of Poppi, being very fond of the Beato Torello, sent him by his steward, one evening in Carnival, a basket full of provisions, praying the good father to accept it for love of him. The steward also carried him many other gifts, which some good ladies, knowing where he was going, took the opportunity to send by his hand.

Having arrived at the cell, he presented them all to the padre, who thanked him much, and returned him the empty baskets; when he took occasion to enquire, how he, being alone, could possibly eat so much in one evening. And Torello, seeing that the steward thought him a great eater, answered: "I am not alone, as you suppose; my companion will come from the woods before long, who has a great appetite, and he will help me." And the steward, hearing this, hid himself in the wood not far from the hermitage, to see who this could be who the padre said had such a fine appetite. He had not waited long when he saw a great wolf go straight to the door of the saint's cell, who opened it for him, and fed

him until he had devoured everything that the steward had brought; and he then began to caress the saint, as a faithful and affectionate dog would his master; and this he continued to do until Torello gave him permission to go, and reminded him that neither he, nor any of his companions, should do any harm to the people of that place until they were at such a distance as to be out of hearing of the bell of the monastery, which the wolf promised to do and obey, by bowing his head. The servant, having seen and heard this, returned home, and related it to the count and the others, to their great amazement.

There was a lady of Bologna, named Vittoriana, who made a pilgrimage to the holy place in Vernia, where the glorious St. Francis received the stigmata; and there her two children fell ill with a violent and dangerous fever; and being, in consequence, much distressed and afflicted, she consulted with some ladies from Poppi, whose devotion had also brought them to the same place, who advised her to take her children, as soon as possible, to the blessed Torello, and commend them to him, that by means of his prayers God would restore their health. And going to him, she commended them to him with faith and tears and hope beyond the power of words to describe. And truly it was not in vain; for the holy man, who was most pitiful, kneeled down and prayed to the Lord for her and her children as only the true servants of God pray; and having so done, he took some water from the spring of which he usually drank and gave it to the children, and they were entirely cured and delivered from that fever. And what is more, the water of that fountain is to this day called the fountain of St. Torello, and is a sovereign remedy against every kind of fever to those who drink of it, as experience has testified and still testifies.

But at last, in the year of our salvation twelve hundred and eigthy-two, the saint having reached the eightieth year of his life, and spent them all in the service of God—many of his good works being unknown—an angel brought him this message: "Rejoice, Torello, for the time is come when thou shalt receive the crown of glory thou hast so long desired, and the reward in paradise of all thy labour in the service of God; for thirty days from this time, on the sixteenth of March, thou shalt be delivered from the prison of this world."

The blessed Torello, having heard this, continued all his devout exercises until the end, which approaching, he went to the abbot and confessed his sins for the last time, and received the holy communion from his hands; and they embraced each other, and he returned to his hermitage. And he took leave of one of his disciples, named Pietro, and exhorted him to persevere in God's service; and having with many affectionate prayers recommended his country and the people of it to the blessing of God, praying especially that it should not be ravaged by wolves, he departed in peace.

And all the people of the parishes around, hearing of his death, hastened to the hermitage; and all desiring that his holy body should repose in their church, a great controversy arose, and much scandal would have ensued, had not the Abbot of Poppi passed into the midst of them and convinced them it was the will of God it should be laid in his monastery; to which they all finally agreed. And a wonderful and miraculous event occurred; for while they were all standing around the holy body, a wolf came in with a little pig in his mouth, and passing through them without fear, placed it at the foot of the bier, and went away.

CHAPTER XV

THE LORELEI

I KNOW not whence it rises,
This thought so full of woe:—
But a tale of the times departed
Haunts me—and will not go.

The air is cool, and it darkens,
And calmly flows the Rhine;
The mountain peaks are sparkling
In the sunny evening-shine.

And yonder sits a maiden,
The fairest of the fair;
With gold is her garment glittering,
And she combs her golden hair.

With a golden comb she combs it,
And a wild song singeth she,
That melts the heart with a wondrous
And powerful melody.

The boatman feels his bosom
With a nameless longing move;
He sees not the gulfs before him,
His gaze is fixed above.

Till over boat and boatman
The Rhine's deep waters run;
And this with her magic singing
The Lorelei hath done!

CHAPTER XVI

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

SO ALL day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea,
Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonnesse about their Lord,
King Arthur. Then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land:
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made—
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more; but, let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.

Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword—and how I row'd across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king;
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seest and lightly bring me word."
To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm—
A little thing may harm a wounded man;
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."
So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept,
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.
There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,

This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw: but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted water flags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded King.
Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag."
To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:
For surer sign had follow'd either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again,
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."
Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud:
"And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost forever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?

What harm, undone? Deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were lost."
So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.
Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."
To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,

Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."
Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night with noises of the Northern Sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.
Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;
But when I look'd again, behold an arm,

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."
And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:
"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."
So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not word;
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.
But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, "Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,

And the long glories of the winter moon.
Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms,
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold: and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes
Or hath come, since the making of the world.
Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me in the barge."
So to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against a brow
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dias-throne—were parch'd with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the King;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists of Camelot, and charged

Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.
Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole Round Table is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world,
And, I the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."
And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within himself make pure! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seëst—if indeed I go

(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."
So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.
But when that moan had past for evermore,
The stillness of the dead world's winter dawn
Amazed him, and he groan'd, "The King is gone."
And therewithal came on him the weird rhyme,
"From the great deep to the great deep he goes"

Whereat he slowly turn'd and slowly clomb
The last hard footstep of that iron crag;
Thence mark'd the black hull moving yet, and cried,
"He passes to be King among the dead,
And after healing of his grievous wound
He comes again; but—if he come no more—
O me, be yon dark Queens in yon black boat,
Who shriek'd and wail'd, the three whereat we gazed
On that high day, when, clothed with living light,
They stood before his throne in silence, friends
Of Arthur, who should help him at his need?"

Then from the dawn it seem'd there came, but faint
As from beyond the limit of the world,
Like the last echo born of a great cry,
Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice
Around a king returning from his wars.

Thereat once more he moved about, and clomb
Ev'n to the highest he could climb, and saw,
Straining his eyes beneath an arch of hand,
Or thought he saw, the speck that bare the King,
Down that long water opening on the deep
Somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go
From less to less and vanish into light.
And the new sun rose bringing the new year.

CHAPTER XVII

RIP VAN WINKLE

The following tale was found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker, an old gentleman of New York, who was very curious in the Dutch history of the province, and the manners of the descendants from its primitive settlers. His historical researches, however, did not lie so much among books as among men; for the former are lamentably scanty on his favourite topics; whereas he found the old burghers, and still more their wives, rich in that legendary lore so invaluable to true history. Whenever, therefore, he happened upon a genuine Dutch family, snugly shut up in its low-roofed farmhouse under a spreading sycamore, he looked upon it as a little clasped volume of black-letter, and studied it with the zeal of a book worm.

The result of all these researches was a history of the province during the reign of the Dutch governors, which he published some years since. There have been various opinions as to the literary character of his work, and, to tell the truth, it is not a whit better than it should be. Its chief merit is its scrupulous accuracy, which indeed was a little questioned on its first appearance, but has since been completely established; and it is now admitted into all historical collections, as a book of unquestionable authority.

The old gentleman died shortly after the publication of his work, and now that he is dead and gone, it cannot do much harm to his memory to say that his time might have been much better employed in weightier labours. He, however, was apt to ride his hobby his own way; and though it did now and then kick up the dust a little in the eyes of his neighbours, and grieve the spirit of some friends, for whom he felt the truest deference and affection; yet his errors and follies are remembered "more in sorrow than in anger," and it begins to be suspected that he never intended to injure or offend. But however his memory may be appreciated by critics, it is still held dear by many folk, whose good opinion is worth having; particularly by certain biscuit-bakers, who have gone so far as to imprint his likeness on their new-year cakes; and have thus given him a chance for immortality, almost equal to the being stamped on a Waterloo Medal, or a Queen Anne's farthing.

WHOEVER has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill Mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the

river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed, every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but sometimes when the rest of the landscape is cloudless they will gather a hood of gray vapours about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle-roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists in the early time of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant (may he rest in peace!) and there were some of the houses of the orginal settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weathercocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple, good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina. He

inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple, good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbour, and an obedient hen-pecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation; and a curtain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant wife may, therefore, in some respects be considered a tolerable blessing, and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favourite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles; and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighbourhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labour. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance;

for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbour, even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone-fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than any where else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some out-door work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst-conditioned farm in the neighbourhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a

pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belongs to a henpecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much henpecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honourable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods—but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his legs, he sneaked about

with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village; which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of His Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless, sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveller. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the school-master, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junto were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbours could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sun-dial. It is true he was rarely heard

to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents however (for every great man has his adherents), perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When anything that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent and angry puffs; but when pleased, he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds; and sometimes, taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapour curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

From even this stronghold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage and call the members all to naught; nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair; and his only alternative, to escape from the labour of the farm and clamour of his wife, was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, with whom he sympathised as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy mistress leads thee a dog's life of it; but never mind, my lad, whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee!" Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face, and if dogs can feel pity I verily believe he reciprocated the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest

parts of the Kaatskill Mountains. He was after his favourite sport squirrel shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and reëchoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging bark, here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from a distance, hallooing, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked round, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air: "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!"—at the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt

a vague apprehension stealing over him; he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place; but supposing it to be some one of the neighbourhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion: a cloth jerkin strapped round the waist, several pair of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulder a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual alacrity; and mutually relieving one another, they clambered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long rolling peals like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft, between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for a moment, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud. During the

whole time Rip and his companion had laboured on in silence; for though the former marvelled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown, that inspired awe and checked familiarty.

On entering the amphitheatre, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the centre was a company of odd-looking personages playing at nine-pins. They were dressed in a quaint outlandish fashion; some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar; one had a large beard, broad face, and small piggish eyes; the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colours. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting in the parlour of Dominie Van Shaick, the village parson, which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip was, that though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever

they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such fixed, statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-lustre countenances that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and made signs to him to wait upon the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees Rip's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavour of excellent Hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another; and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking, he found himself on the green knoll whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes—it was a bright, sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft, and breasting the pure mountain breeze. "Surely," thought Rip, "I have not slept here all night." He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with a keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the wild retreat among the rocks—the woe-begone party at nine-pins—the flagon—"Oh! that flagon! that wicked flagon!" thought Rip—"what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle?"

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean, well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel incrusted with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roisters of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and, having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him, and shouted his name, but all in vain; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening's gambol, and if he met with any of the party, to demand his dog and gun. As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "These mountain beds do not agree with me," thought Rip, "and if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of the rheumatism, I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle." With some difficulty he got down into the glen; he found the gully up which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening; but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras, and witch-hazel, and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grapevines that twisted their coils or tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheatre; but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high, impenetrable wall, over which the torrent come tumbling

in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad, deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog; he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done? the morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun; he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, not one of which he recognised for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered; it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and

those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows—everything was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but the day before. There stood the Kaatskill Mountains—there ran the silver Hudson at a distance—there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been—Rip was sorely perplexed—"That flagon last night," thought he, "has addled my poor head sadly!"

It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay—the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed—"My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me!"

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolateness overcame all his connubial fears—he called loudly for his wife and children—the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then again all was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn—but it, too, was gone. A large, rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted, "The

Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle." Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red night-cap, and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes—all this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognised on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe; but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, disputatious tone about it, instead of the accustomed phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco-smoke instead of idle speeches; or Van Bummel, the school-master, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean, bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of handbills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens—elections—members of Congress—liberty—Bunker's Hill—heroes of seventy-six—and other words, which were a perfect Babylonish jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and an army of women and children at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern-politicians. They crowded

round him, eying him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired "on which side he voted?" Rip started in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear, "Whether he was Federal or Democrat?" Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone, "what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village?"—"Alas! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, "I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the king, God bless him!"

Here a general shout burst from the bystanders—"A tory! a tory! a spy! a refugee! hustle him! away with him!" It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit what he came there for, and whom he was seeking? The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbours, who used to keep about the tavern.

"Well—who are they?—name them."

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired, "Where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man

replied, in a thin, piping voice: "Nicholas Vedder! why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the church yard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

"Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point—others say he was drowned in a squall at the foot of Antony's Nose. I don't know—he never came back again."

"Where's Van Bummel, the school-master?"

"He went off to the wars too, was a great militia general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand: war—Congress—Stony Point; he had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in dispair, "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?"

"Oh, Rip Van Winkle!" exclaimed two or three, "Oh, to be sure! that's Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself, as he went up the mountain: apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name?

"God knows," exclaimed he, at his wit's end; "I'm not myself—I'm somebody else—that's me yonder

—no—that's somebody else got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and everything's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am!"

The bystanders began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief, at the very suggestion of which the self-important man in the cocked hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh, comely women pressed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. "Hush, Rip," cried she, "hush, you little fool; the old man won't hurt you." The name of the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice, all awakened a train of recollections in his mind. "What is your name, my good woman?" asked he.

"Judith Gardenier."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man, Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since,—his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask; and he put it with a faltering voice:

"Where's your mother?"

"Oh, she too had died but a short time since; she broke a blood-vessel in a fit of passion at a New England peddler."

There was a drop of comfort at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. "I am your father!" cried he—"Young Rip Van Winkle once —old Rip Van Winkle now! Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle?"

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, "Sure enough it is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself! Welcome home again, old neighbour—Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him but as one night. The neighbours stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks; and the self-important man in the cocked hat, who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head—upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of the that name, who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighbourhood. He recollected Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill Mountains had always been haunted by strange beings. That it was affirmed that the great

Hendrick Hudson, the first discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the Half-moon; being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river and the great city called by his name. That his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at nine-pins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up, and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug well-furnished house, and a stout cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm; but evinced an hereditary disposition to attend to anything else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits; he soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favour.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can be idle with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench at the inn door, and was reverenced as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the old times "before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his torpor. How

that there had been a revolutionary war—that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England—and that, instead of being a subject of his Majesty George the Third, he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politican; the changes of states and empires made but little impression on him; but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was—petticoat government. Happily that was at an end; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes, which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, or joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed, at first, to vary on some points every time he told it, which was, doubtless, owing to his having so recently awaked. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighbourhood but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day they never hear a thunder-storm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill, but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of nine-pins; and it is a common wish of all henpecked husbands in the neighbourhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE GRAY CHAMPION

THERE was once a time when New England groaned under the actual pressure of heavier wrongs than those threatened ones which brought on the Revolution. James II., the bigoted successor of Charles the Voluptuous, had annulled the charters of all the colonies, and sent a harsh and unprincipled soldier to take away our liberites and endanger our religion. The administration of Sir Edmund Andros lacked scarcely a single characteristic of tyranny: a Governor and Council, holding office from the King, and wholly independent of the country; laws made and taxes levied without concurrence of the people immediate or by their representatives; the rights of private citizens violated, and the titles of all landed property declared void; the voice of complaint stifled by restrictions on the press; and, finally, disaffection overawed by the first band of mercenary troops that ever marched on our free soil. For two years our ancestors were kept in sullen submission by that filial love which had invariably secured their allegiance to the mother country, whether its head chanced to be a Parliament, Protector, or Popish Monarch. Till these evil times, however, such allegiance had been merely nominal, and the colonists had ruled themselves, enjoying far more freedom than is even yet the privilege of the native subjects of Great Britain.

At length a rumour reached our shores that the Prince of Orange had ventured on an enterprise, the success of which would be the triumph of civil and religious rights and the salvation of New England. It was but a doubtful whisper; it might be false, or the attempt might fail; and, in either case, the man that stirred against King James would lose his head. Still the intelligence produced a marked effect. The people smiled mysteriously in the streets, and threw bold glances at their oppressors; while far and wide there was a subdued and silent agitation, as if the slightest signal would rouse the whole land from its sluggish despondency. Aware of their danger, the rulers resolved to avert it by an imposing display of strength, and perhaps to confirm their despotism by yet harsher measures. One afternoon in April, 1689, Sir Edmund Andros and his favourite councillors, being warm with wine, assembled the red-coats of the Governor's Guard, and made their appearance in the streets of Boston. The sun was near setting when the march commenced.

The roll of the drum at that unquiet crisis seemed to go through the streets, less as the martial music of the soldiers, than as a muster-call to the inhabitants themselves. A multitude, by various avenues, assembled in King Street, which was destined to be the scene, nearly a century afterward, of another encounter between the troops of Britain, and a people struggling against her tyranny. Though more than sixty years had elapsed since the pilgrims came, this crowd of their descendants still showed the strong and sombre features of their character perhaps more strikingly in such a stern emergency than on happier occasions. There were the sober garb, the general severity of mien, the gloomy but undis-

mayed expression, the scriptural forms of speech, and the confidence in Heaven's blessing on a righteous cause, which would have marked a band of the original Puritans, when threatened by some peril of the wilderness. Indeed, it was not yet time for the old spirit to be extinct; since there were men in the street that day who had worshipped there beneath the trees, before a house was reared to the God for whom they had become exiles. Old soldiers of the Parliament were here, too, smiling grimly at the thought that their aged arms might strike another blow against the house of Stuart. Here, also, were the veterans of King Philip's war, who had burned villages and slaughtered young and old, with pious fierceness, while the godly souls throughout the land were helping them with prayer. Several ministers were scattered among the crowd, which, unlike all other mobs, regarded them with such reverence, as if there were sanctity in their very garments. These holy men exerted their influence to quiet the people, but not to disperse them. Meantime, the purpose of the Governor, in disturbing the peace of the town at a period when the slightest commotion might throw the country into a ferment, was almost the universal subject of inquiry, and variously explained.

"Satan will strike his master-stroke presently," cried some, "because he knoweth that his time is short. All our godly pastors are to be dragged to prison! We shall see them at a Smithfield fire in King Street!"

Hereupon the people of each parish gathered closer round their minister, who looked calmly upward and assumed a more apostolic dignity, as well befitted a candidate for the highest honour of his profession, the crown of martyrdom. It was actually fancied, at that

period, that New England might have a John Rogers of her own to take the place of that worthy in the Primer.

"The Pope of Rome has given orders for a new St. Bartholomew!" cried others. "We are to be massacred, man and male child!"

Neither was this rumour wholly discredited, although the wiser class believed the Governor's object somewhat less atrocious. His predecessor under the old charter, Bradstreet, a venerable companion of the first settlers, was known to be in town. There were grounds for conjecturing, that Sir Edmund Andros intended at once to strike terror by a parade of military force, and to confound the opposite faction by possessing himself of their chief.

"Stand firm for the old charter Governor!" shouted the crowd, seizing upon the idea. "The good old Governor Bradstreet!"

While this cry was at the loudest, the people were surprised by the well-known figure of Governor Bradstreet himself, a patriarch of nearly ninety, who appeared on the elevated steps of a door, and, with characteristic mildness, besought them to submit to the constituted authorities.

"My children," concluded this venerable person, "do nothing rashly. Cry not aloud, but pray for the welfare of New England, and expect patiently what the Lord will do in this matter!"

The event was soon to be decided. All this time, the roll of the drum had been approaching through Cornhill, louder and deeper, till with reverberations from house to house, and the regular tramp of martial footsteps, it burst into the street. A double rank of soldiers made their appearance, occupying the whole

breadth of the passage, with shouldered matchlocks, and matches burning, so as to present a row of fires in the dusk. Their steady march was like the progress of a machine, that would roll irresistibly over everything in its way. Next, moving slowly, with a confused clatter of hoofs on the pavement, rode a party of mounted gentlemen, the central figure being Sir Edmund Andros, elderly, but erect and soldier-like. Those around him were his favourite councillors, and the bitterest foes of New England. At his right hand rode Edward Randolph, our arch-enemy, that "blasted wretch," as Cotton Mather calls him, who achieved the downfall of our ancient government, and was followed with a sensible curse through life and to his grave. On the other side was Bullivant, scattering jests and mockery as he rode along. Dudley came behind, with a downcast look, dreading, as well he might, to meet the indignant gaze of the people, who beheld him, their only countryman by birth, among the oppressors of his native land. The captain of a frigate in the harbour, and two or three civil officers under the Crown, were also there. But the figure which most attracted the public eye, and stirred up the deepest feeling, was the Episcopal clergyman of King's Chapel, riding haughtily among the magistrates in his priestly vestments, the fitting representative of prelacy and persecution, the union of church and state, and all those abominations which had driven the Puritans to the wilderness. Another guard of soldiers, in double rank, brought up the rear.

The whole scene was a picture of the condition of New England, and its moral, the deformity of any government that does not grow out of the nature of things and the character of the people. On one side the religious

multitude, with their sad visages and dark attire, and on the other, the group of despotic rulers, with the high churchman in the midst, and here and there a crucifix at their bosoms, all magnificently clad, flushed with wine, proud of unjust authority, and scoffing at the universal groan. And the mercenary soldiers, waiting but the word to deluge the street with blood, showed the only means by which obedience could be secured.

"O Lord of Hosts," cried a voice among the crowd, "provide a Champion for thy people!"

This ejaculation was loudly uttered, and served as a herald's cry, to introduce a remarkable personage. The crowd had rolled back, and were now huddled together nearly at the extremity of the street, while the soldiers had advanced no more than a third of its length. The intervening space was empty—a paved solitude, between lofty edifices, which threw almost a twilight shadow over it. Suddenly, there was seen the figure of an ancient man, who seemed to have emerged from among the people, and was walking by himself along the centre of the street, to confront the armed band. He wore the old Puritan dress, a dark cloak and a steeple-crowned hat, in the fashion of at least fifty years before, with a heavy sword upon his thigh, but a staff in his hand to assist the tremulous gait of age.

When at some distance from the multitude, the old man turned slowly round, displaying a face of antique majesty, rendered doubly venerable by the hoary beard that descended on his breast. He made a gesture at once of encouragement and warning, then turned again, and resumed his way.

"Who is this gray patriarch?" asked the young men of their sires.

"Who is this venerable brother?" asked the old men among themselves.

But none could make reply. The fathers of the people, those of four-score years and upwards, were disturbed, deeming it strange that they should forget one of such evident authority, whom they must have known in their early days, the associate of Winthrop, and all the old councillors, giving laws, and making prayers, and leading them against the savage. The elderly men ought to have remembered him, too, with locks as gray in their youth, as their own were now. And the young! How could he have passed so utterly from their memories—that hoary sire, the relic of long-departed times, whose awful benediction had surely been bestowed on their uncovered heads, in childhood?

"Whence did he come? What is his purpose? Who can this old man be?" whispered the wondering crowd.

Meanwhile, the venerable stranger, staff in hand, was pursuing his solitary walk along the centre of the street. As he drew near the advancing soldiers, and as the roll of their drum came full upon his ear, the old man raised himself to a loftier mien, while the decrepitude of age seemed to fall from his shoulders, leaving him in gray but unbroken dignity. Now, he marched onward with a warrior's step, keeping time to the military music. Thus the aged form advanced on one side, and the whole parade of soldiers and magistrates on the other, till, when scarcely twenty yards remained between, the old man grasped his staff by the middle, and held it before him like a leader's truncheon.

"Stand!" cried he.

The eye, the face, and attitude of command; the solemn, yet warlike peal of that voice, fit either to rule a

host in the battle-field or be raised to God in prayer, were irresistible. At the old man's word and outstretched arm, the roll of the drum was hushed at once, and the advancing line stood still. A tremulous enthusiasm seized upon the multitude. That stately form, combining the leader and the saint, so gray, so dimly seen, in such an ancient garb, could only belong to some old champion of the righteous cause, whom the oppressor's drum had summoned from his grave. They raised a shout of awe and exultation, and looked for the deliverance of New England.

The Governor, and the gentlemen of his party, perceiving themselves brought to an unexpcted stand, rode hastily forward, as if they would have pressed their snorting and affrighted horses right against the hoary apparition. He, however, blenched not a step, but glancing his severe eye round the group, which half encompassed him, at last bent it sternly on Sir Edmund Andros. One would have thought that the dark old man was chief ruler there, and that the Governor and Council, with soldiers at their back, representing the whole power and authority of the Crown, had no alternative but obedience.

"What does this old fellow here?" cried Edward Randolph, fiercely. "On, Sir Edmund! Bid the soldiers forward, and give the dotard the same choice that you give all his countrymen—to stand aside or be trampled on!"

"Nay, nay, let us show respect to the good grandsire," said Bullivant, laughing. "See you not, he is some old round-headed dignitary, who hath lain asleep these thirty years, and knows nothing of the change of times? Doubtless, he thinks to put us down with a proclamation in Old Noll's name!"

"Are you mad, old man?" demanded Sir Edmund Andros, in loud and harsh tones. "How dare you stay the march of King James's Governor?"

"I have stayed the march of a King himself, ere now," replied the gray figure, with stern composure. "I am here, Sir Governor, because the cry of an oppressed people hath disturbed me in my secret place; and beseeching this favour earnestly of the Lord, it was vouchsafed me to appear once again on earth, in the good old cause of his saints. And what speak ye of James? There is no longer a Popish tyrant on the throne of England, and by to-morrow noon, his name shall be a by-word in this very street, where ye would make it a word of terror. Back, thou that wast a Governor, back! With this night thy power is ended—to-morrow, the prison!—back, lest I foretell the scaffold!"

The people had been drawing nearer and nearer, and drinking in the words of their champion, who spoke in accents long disused, like one unaccustomed to converse, except with the dead of many years ago. But his voice stirred their souls. They confronted the soldiers, not wholly without arms, and ready to convert the very stones of the street into deadly weapons. Sir Edmund Andros looked at the old man; then he cast his hard and cruel eye over the multitude, and beheld them burning with that lurid wrath, so difficult to kindle or to quench; and again he fixed his gaze on the aged form, which stood obscurely in an open space, where neither friend nor foe had thrust himself. What were his thoughts, he uttered no word which might discover. But whether the oppressor were averawed by the Gray Champion's look, or perceived his peril in the threatening attitude of the people, it is certain that he gave back, and

ordered his soldiers to commence a slow and guarded retreat. Before another sunset, the Governor, and all that rode so proudly with him, were prisoners, and long ere it was known that James had abdicated, King William was proclaimed throughout New England.

But where was the Gray Champion? Some reported that, when the troops had gone from King Street, and the people were thronging tumultuously in their rear, Bradstreet, the aged Governor, was seen to embrace a form more aged than his own. Others soberly affirmed, that while they marvelled at the venerable grandeur of his aspect, the old man had faded from their eyes, melting slowly into the hues of twilight, till, where he stood, there was an empty space. But all agreed that the hoary shape was gone. The men of that generation watched for his reappearance, in sunshine and in twilight, but never saw him more, nor knew when his funeral passed, nor where his gravestone was.

And who was the Gray Champion? Perhaps his name might be found in the records of that stern Court of Justice, which passed a sentence, too mighty for the age, but glorious in all after-times, for its humbling lesson to the monarch and its high example to the subject. I have heard, that whenever the descendants of the Puritans are to show the spirit of their sires, the old man appears again. When eighty years had passed, he walked once more in King Street. Five years later, in the twilight of an April morning, he stood on the green, beside the meeting-house, at Lexington, where now the obelisk of granite, with a slab of slate inlaid, commemorates the first fallen of the Revolution. And when our fathers were toiling at the breastwork on Bunker's Hill, all through that night the old warrior walked his rounds. Long, long may it

be, ere he comes again! His hour is one of darkness, and adversity, and peril. But should domestic tyranny oppress us, or the invader's step pollute our soil, still may the Gray Champion come, for he is the type of New England's hereditary spirit; and his shadowy march, on the eve of danger, must ever be the pledge, that New England's sons will vindicate their ancestry.

CHAPTER XIX

THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW

FOUND AMONG THE PAPERS OF THE LATE DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER

IN THE bosom of one of those spacious coves which indent the eastern shore of the Hudson, at that broad expansion of the river denominated by the ancient Dutch navigators the Tappan Zee, and where they always prudently shortened sail and implored the protection of St. Nicholas when they crossed, there lies a small market town or rural port, which by some is called Greensburgh, but which is more generally and properly known by the name of Tarry Town. This name was given, we are told, in former days, by the good housewives of the adjacent country, from the inveterate propensity of their husbands to linger about the village tavern on market days. Be that as it may, I do not vouch for the fact, but merely advert to it, for the sake of being precise and authentic. Not far from this village, perhaps about two miles, there is a little valley or rather lap of land among high hills, which is one of the quietest places in the whole world. A small brook glides through it, with just murmur enough to lull one to repose; and the occasional whistle of a quail or tapping of a woodpecker is almost the only sound that ever breaks in upon the uniform tranquillity.

I recollect that, when a stripling, my first exploit in squirrel-shooting was in a grove of tall walnut trees that

shades one side of the valley. I had wandered into it at noontime, when all nature is peculiarly quiet, and was startled by the roar of my own gun, as it broke the Sabbath stillness around and was prolonged and reverberated by the angry echoes. If ever I should wish for a retreat whither I might steal from the world and its distractions, and dream quietly away the remnant of a troubled life, I know of none more promising than this little valley.

From the listless repose of the place, and the peculiar character of its inhabitants, who are descendants from the original Dutch settlers, this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of Sleepy Hollow, and its rustic lads are called the Sleepy Hollow Boys throughout all the neighbouring country. A drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land, and to pervade the very atmosphere. Some say that the place was bewitched by a High German doctor, during the early days of the settlement; others, that an old Indian chief, the prophet or wizard of his tribe, held his powwows there before the country was discovered by Master Hendrick Hudson. Certain it is, the place still continues under the sway of some witching power, that holds a spell over the minds of the good people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. They are given to all kinds of marvellous beliefs; are subject to trances and visions, and frequently see strange sights, and hear music and voices in the air. The whole neighbourhood abounds with local tales, haunted spots, and twilight superstitions; stars shoot and meteors glare oftener across the valley than in any other part of the country, and the nightmare, with her whole ninefold, seems to make it the favourite scene of her gambols.

The dominant spirit, however, that haunts this en-

chanted region, and seems to be commander-in-chief of all the powers of the air, is the apparition of a figure on horseback, without a head. It is said by some to be the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannon-ball, in some nameless battle during the Revolutionary War, and who is ever and anon seen by the country folk hurrying along in the gloom of night, as if on the wings of the wind. His haunts are not confined to the valley, but extend at times to the adjacent roads, and especially to the vicinity of a church at no great distance. Indeed, certain of the most authentic historians of those parts, who have been careful in collecting and collating the floating facts concerning this spectre, allege that the body of the trooper having been buried in the churchyard, the ghost rides forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head, and that the rushing speed with which he sometimes passes along the Hollow, like a midnight blast, is owing to his being belated, and in a hurry to get back to the churchyard before daybreak.

Such is the general purport of this legendary superstition, which has furnished materials for many a wild story in that region of shadows; and the spectre is known at all the country firesides, by the name of the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow.

It is remarkable that the visionary propensity I have mentioned is not confined to the native inhabitants of the valley, but is unconsciously imbibed by every one who resides there for a time. However wide awake they may have been before they entered that sleepy region, they are sure, in a little time, to inhale the witching influence of the air, and begin to grow imaginative, to dream dreams, and see apparitions.

I mention this peaceful spot with all possible laud; for it is in such little retired Dutch valleys, found here and there embosomed in the great state of New York, that population, manners, and customs remain fixed, while the great torrent of migration and improvement, which is making such incessant changes in other parts of this restless country, sweeps by them unobserved. They are like those little nooks of still water, which border a rapid stream, where we may see the straw and bubble riding quietly at anchor, or slowly revolving in their mimic harbour, undisturbed by the brush of the passing current. Though many years have elapsed since I trod the drowsy shades of Sleepy Hollow, yet I question whether I should not still find the same trees and the same families vegetating in its sheltered bosom.

In this by-place of nature there abode, in a remote period of American history, that is to say, some thirty years since, a worthy wight of the name of Ichabod Crane, who sojourned, or, as he expressed it, "tarried," in Sleepy Hollow, for the purpose of instructing the children of the vicinity. He was a native of Connecticut, a state which supplies the Union with pioneers for the mind as well as for the forest, and sends forth yearly its legions of frontier woodmen and country schoolmasters. The cognomen of Crane was not inapplicable to his person. He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small, and flat at top, with huge ears, large green glassy eyes, and a long snipe nose, so that it looked like a weathercock perched upon his spindle neck to tell which way the wind blew. To see him strid-

ing along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have mistaken him for the genius of famine descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped from a cornfield.

His schoolhouse was a low building of one large room, rudely constructed of logs; the windows partly glazed, and partly patched with leaves of old copybooks. It was most ingeniously secured at vacant hours, by a withe twisted in the handle of the door, and stakes set against the window shutters; so that though a thief might get in with perfect ease, he would find some embarrassment in getting out—an idea most probably borrowed by the architect, Yost Van Houten, from the mystery of an eelpot. The schoolhouse stood in a rather lonely but pleasant situation, just at the foot of a woody hill, with a brook running close by, and a formidable birch tree growing at one end of it. From hence the low murmur of his pupils' voices, conning over their lessons, might be heard in a drowsy summer's day, like the hum of a beehive; interrupted now and then by the authoritative voice of the master, in the tone of menace or command; or, peradventure, by the appalling sound of the birch, as he urged some tardy loiterer along the flowery path of knowledge. Truth to say, he was a conscientious man, and ever bore in mind the golden maxim, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." Ichabod Crane's scholars certainly were not spoiled.

I would not have it imagined, however, that he was one of those cruel potentates of the school who joy in the smart of their subjects; on the contrary, he administered justice with discrimination rather than severity; taking the burden off the backs of the weak, and laying it on those of the strong. Your mere puny stripling, that

winced at the least flourish of the rod, was passed by with indulgence; but the claims of justice were satisfied by inflicting a double portion on some little tough, wrong-headed, broad-skirted Dutch urchin, who sulked and swelled and grew dogged and sullen beneath the birch. All this he called "doing his duty by their parents"; and he never inflicted a chastisement without following it by the assurance, so consolatory to the smarting urchin, that "he would remember it and thank him for it the longest day he had to live."

When school hours were over, he was even the companion and playmate of the larger boys; and on holiday afternoons would convoy some of the smaller ones home, who happened to have pretty sisters, or good housewives for mothers, noted for the comforts of the cupboard. Indeed, it behooved him to keep on good terms with his pupils. The revenue arising from his school was small, and would have been scarcely sufficient to furnish him with daily bread, for he was a huge feeder, and, though lank, had the dilating powers of an anaconda; but to help out his maintenance, he was, according to country custom in those parts, boarded and lodged at the houses of the farmers whose children he instructed. With these he lived successively a week at a time, thus going the rounds of the neighbourhood, with all his worldly effects tied up in a cotton handkerchief.

That all this might not be too onerous on the purses of his rustic patrons, who are apt to consider the costs of schooling a grievous burden, and schoolmasters as mere drones, he had various ways of rendering himself both useful and agreeable. He assisted the farmers occasionally in the lighter labours of their farms, helped

to make hay, mended the fences, took the horses to water, drove the cows from pasture, and cut wood for the winter fire. He laid aside, too, all the dominant dignity and absolute sway with which he lorded it in his little empire, the school, and became wonderfully gentle and ingratiating. He found favour in the eyes of the mothers by petting the children, particularly the youngest; and like the lion bold, which whilom so magnanimously the lamb did hold, he would sit with a child on one knee, and rock a cradle with his foot for whole hours together.

In addition to his other vocations, he was the singing-master of the neighbourhood, and picked up many bright shillings by instructing the young folks in psalmody. It was a matter of no little vanity to him on Sundays, to take his station in front of the church gallery, with a band of chosen singers; where, in his own mind, he completely carried away the palm from the parson. Certain it is, his voice resounded far above all the rest of the congregation; and there are peculiar quavers still to be heard in that church, and which may even be heard half a mile off, quite to the opposite side of the mill-pond, on a still Sunday morning, which are said to be legitimately descended from the nose of Ichabod Crane. Thus, by divers little makeshifts, in that ingenious way which is commonly denominated "by hook and by crook," the worthy pedagogue got on tolerably enough, and was thought, by all who understood nothing of the labour of headwork, to have a wonderfully easy life of it.

The schoolmaster is generally a man of some importance in the female circle of a rural neighbourhood; being considered a kind of idle, gentlemanlike personage, of vastly superior taste and acomplishments to the rough

country swains, and, indeed, inferior in learning only to the parson. His appearance, therefore, is apt to occasion some little stir at the tea-table of a farmhouse, and the addition of a supernumerary dish of cakes or sweetmeats, or, peradventure, the parade of a silver teapot. Our man of letters, therefore, was peculiarly happy in the smiles of all the country damsels. How he would figure among them in the churchyard, between services on Sundays! gathering grapes for them from the wild vines that overran the surrounding trees; reciting for their amusement all the epitaphs on the tombstones; or sauntering, with a whole bevy of them, along the banks of the adjacent mill-pond; while the more bashful country bumpkins hung sheepishly back, envying his superior elegance and address.

From his half-itinerant life, also, he was a kind of tavelling gazette, carrying the whole budget of local gossip from house to house, so that his appearance was always greeted with satisfaction. He was, moreover, esteemed by the women as a man of great erudition, for he had read several books quite through, and was a perfect master of Cotton Mather's "History of New England Witchcraft," in which, by the way, he most firmly and potently believed.

He was, in fact, an odd mixture of small shrewdness and simple credulity. His appetite for the marvellous, and his powers of digesting it, were equally extraordinary; and both had been increased by his residence in this spellbound region. No tale was too gross or monstrous for his capacious swallow. It was often his delight, after his school was dismissed in the afternoon, to stretch himself on the rich bed of clover bordering the little brook that whimpered by his schoolhouse, and there con

over old Mather's direful tales, until the gathering dusk of evening made the printed page a mere mist before his eyes. Then, as he wended his way by swamp and stream and awful woodland, to the farmhouse where he happened to be quartered, every sound of nature, at that witching hour, fluttered his excited imagination—the moan of the whip-poor-will from the hillside, the boding cry of the tree toad, that harbinger of storm, the dreary hooting of the screech owl, to the sudden rustling in the thicket of birds frightened from their roost. The fireflies, too, which sparkled most vividly in the darkest places, now and then startled him, as one of uncommon brightness would stream across his path; and if, by chance, a huge blockhead of a beetle came winging his blundering flight against him, the poor varlet was ready to give up the ghost, with the idea that he was struck with a witch's token. His only resource on such occasions, either to drown thought or drive away evil spirits, was to sing psalm tunes; and the good people of Sleepy Hollow, as they sat by their doors of an evening, were often filled with awe at hearing his nasal melody, "in linked sweetness long drawn out," floating from the distant hill, or along the dusky road.

Another of his sources of fearful pleasure was to pass long winter evenings with the old Dutch wives, as they sat spinning by the fire, with a row of apples roasting and spluttering along the hearth, and listen to their marvellous tales of ghosts and goblins, and haunted fields, and haunted brooks, and haunted bridges, and haunted houses, and particularly of the headless horseman, or Galloping Hessian of the Hollow, as they sometimes called him. He would delight them equally by his anecdotes of witchcraft, and of the direful omens and

portentous sights and sounds in the air, which prevailed in the earlier times of Connecticut; and would frighten them woefully with speculations upon comets and shooting stars; and with the alarming fact that the world did absolutely turn round, and that they were half the time topsy-turvy!

But if there was a pleasure in all this, while snugly cuddling in the chimney corner of a chamber that was all of a ruddy glow from the crackling wood fire, and where, of course, no spectre dared to show its face, it was dearly purchased by the terrors of his subsequent walk homewards. What fearful shapes and shadows beset his path, amidst the dim and ghastly glare of a snowy night! With what wistful look did he eye every trembling ray of light streaming across the waste fields from some distant window! How often was he appalled by some shrub covered with snow, which, like a sheeted spectre, beset his very path! How often did he shrink with curdling awe at the sound of his own steps on the frosty crust beneath his feet; and dread to look over his shoulder, lest he should behold some uncouth being tramping close behind him! and how often was he thrown into complete dismay by some rushing blast, howling among the trees, in the idea that it was the Galloping Hessian on one of his nightly scourings!

All these, however, were mere terrors of the night, phantoms of the mind that walk in darkness; and though he had seen many spectres in his time, and been more than once beset by Satan in divers shapes, in his lonely perambulations, yet daylight put an end to all these evils; and he would have passed a pleasant life of it, in despite of the Devil and all his works, if his path had not been crossed by a being that causes more perplexity to mortal

man than ghosts, goblins, and the whole race of witches put together, and that was—a woman.

Among the musical disciples who assembled, one evening in each week, to receive his instructions in psalmody, was Katrina Van Tassel, the daughter and only child of a substantial Dutch farmer. She was a blooming lass of fresh eighteen; plump as a partridge; ripe and melting and rosy-cheeked as one of her father's peaches, and universally famed, not merely for her beauty, but her vast expectations. She was withal a little of a coquette, as might be perceived even in her dress, which was a mixture of ancient and modern fashions, as most suited to set off her charms. She wore the ornaments of pure yellow gold, which her great-great-grandmother had brought over from Saardam; the tempting stomacher of the olden time, and withal a provokingly short petticoat, to display the prettiest foot and ankle in the country round.

Ichabod Crane had a soft and foolish heart toward the sex; and it is not to be wondered at, that so tempting a morsel soon found favour in his eyes, more especially after he had visited her in her paternal mansion. Old Baltus Van Tassel was a perfect picture of a thriving, contented, liberal hearted farmer. He seldom, it is true, sent either his eyes or his thoughts beyond the boundaries of his own farm; but within those everything was snug, happy and well-conditioned. He was satisfied with his wealth, but not proud of it; and piqued himself upon the hearty abundance, rather than the style in which he lived. His stronghold was situated on the banks of the Hudson, in one of those green, sheltered, fertile nooks in which the Dutch farmers are so fond of nestling. A great elm tree spread its broad branches over it, at the foot of which

bubbled up a spring of the softest and sweetest water, in a little well formed of a barrel; and then stole sparkling away through the grass, to a neighbouring brook, that babbled along among alders and dwarf willows. Hard by the farmhouse was a vast barn, that might have served for a church; every window and crevice of which seemed bursting forth with the treasures of the farm; the flail was busily resounding within it from morning to night; swallows and martins skimmed twittering about the eaves; and rows of pigeons, some with one eye turned up, as if watching the weather, some with their heads under their wings or buried in their bosoms, and others swelling, and cooing, and bowing about their dames, were enjoying the sunshine on the roof. Sleek unwieldy porkers were grunting in the repose and abundance of their pens, from whence sallied forth, now and then, troops of sucking pigs, as if to snuff the air. A stately squadron of snowy geese were riding in an adjoining pond, convoying whole fleets of ducks; regiments of turkeys were gobbling through the farmyard, and Guinea fowls fretting about it, like ill-tempered housewives, with their peevish, discontented cry. Before the barn door strutted the gallant cock, that pattern of a husband, a warrior and a fine gentleman, clapping his burnished wings and crowing in the pride and gladness of his heart—sometimes tearing up the earth with his feet, and then generously calling his ever-hungry family of wives and children to enjoy the rich morsel which he had discovered.

The pedagogue's mouth watered as he looked upon this sumptuous promise of luxurious winter fare. In his devouring mind's eye, he pictured to himself every roasting-pig running about with a pudding in his belly,

and an apple in his mouth; the pigeons were snugly put to bed in a comfortable pie, and tucked in with a coverlet of crust; the geese were swimming in their own gravy; and the ducks pairing cosily in dishes, like snug married couples, with a decent competency of onion sauce. In the porkers he saw carved out the future sleek side of bacon, and juicy relishing ham; not a turkey but he beheld daintily trussed up, with its gizzard under its wing, and, peradventure, a necklace of savoury sausages; and even bright chanticleer himself lay sprawling on his back, in a side dish, with uplifted claws, as if craving that quarter which his chivalrous spirit disdained to ask while living.

As the enraptured Ichabod fancied all this, and as he rolled his great green eyes over the fat meadow lands, the rich fields of wheat, of rye, of buckwheat, and Indian corn, and the orchards burdened with ruddy fruit, which surrounded the warm tenement of Van Tassel, his heart yearned after the damsel who was to inherit these domains, and his imagination expanded with the idea, how they might be readily turned into cash, and the money invested in immense tracts of wild land, and shingle palaces in the wilderness. Nay, his busy fancy already realised his hopes, and presented to him the blooming Katrina, with a whole family of children, mounted on the top of a wagon loaded with household trumpery, with pots and kettles dangling beneath; and he beheld himself bestriding a pacing mare, with a colt at her heels, setting out for Kentucky, Tennessee—or the Lord knows where!

When he entered the house, the conquest of his heart was complete. It was one of those spacious farmhouses, with high ridged but lowly sloping roofs, built in the style handed down from the first Dutch settlers; the

low projecting eaves forming a piazza along the front, capable of being closed up in bad weather. Under this were hung flails, harness, various utensils of husbandry, and nets for fishing in the neighbouring river. Benches were built along the sides for summer use; and a great spinning-wheel at one end, and a churn at the other, showed the various uses to which this important porch might be devoted. From this piazza the wondering Ichabod entered the hall, which formed the centre of the mansion, and the place of usual residence. Here rows of resplendent pewter, ranged on a long dresser, dazzled his eyes. In one corner stood a huge bag of wool, ready to be spun; in another, a quantity of linsey-woolsey just from the loom; ears of Indian corn, and strings of dried apples and peaches, hung in gay festoons along the walls, mingled with the gaud of red peppers; and a door left ajar gave him a peep into the best parlour, where the claw footed chairs and dark mahogany tables shone like mirrors; andirons, with their accompanying shovel and tongs, glistened from their covert of asparagus tops; mock-oranges and conch-shells decorated the mantle-piece; strings of various coloured birds' eggs were suspended above it; a great ostrich egg was hung from the centre of the room, and a corner cupboard, knowingly left open, displayed immense treasures of old silver and well mended china.

From the moment Ichabod laid his eyes upon these regions of delight, the peace of his mind was at an end, and his only study was how to gain the affections of the peerless daughter of Van Tassel. In this enterprise, however, he had more real difficulties than generally fell to the lot of a knight-errant of yore, who seldom had anything but giants, enchanters, fiery dragons, and such

like easily conquered adversaries, to contend with, and had to make his way merely through gates of iron and brass, and walls of adamant to the castle keep, where the lady of his heart was confined; all which he achieved as easily as a man would carve his way to the centre of a Christmas pie; and then the lady gave him her hand as a matter of course. Ichabod, on the contrary, had to win his way to the heart of a country coquette, beset with a labyrinth of whims and caprices, which were forever presenting new difficulties and impediments; and he had to encounter a host of fearful adversaries of real flesh and blood, the numerous rustic admirers, who beset every portal to her heart, keeping a watchful and angry eye upon each other, but ready to fly out in the common cause against any new competitor.

Among these, the most formidable was a burly, roaring, roystering blade, of the name of Abraham, or, according to the Dutch abbreviation, Brom Van Brunt, the hero of the country round, which rang with his feats of strength and hardihood. He was broad-shouldered and double-jointed, with short curly black hair, and a bluff but not unpleasant countenance, having a mingled air of fun and arrogance. From his Herculean frame and great powers of limb, he had received the nickname of Brom Bones, by which he was universally known. He was famed for great knowledge and skill in horsemanship, being as dexterous on horseback as a Tartar. He was foremost at all races and cock-fights; and, with the ascendancy which bodily strength always acquires in rustic life, was the umpire in all disputes, setting his hat on one side, and giving his decisions with an air and tone that admitted of no gainsay or appeal. He was always ready for either a fight or a frolic; but had more mischief

than ill-will in his composition; and with all his overbearing roughness, there was a strong dash of waggish good humour at bottom. He had three or four boon companions, who regarded him as their model, and at the head of whom he scoured the country, attending every scene of feud or merriment for miles round. In cold weather he was distinguished by a fur cap, surmounted with a flaunting fox's tail; and when the folks at a country gathering descried this well-known crest at a distance, whisking about among a squad of hard riders, they always stood by for a squall. Sometimes his crew would be heard dashing along past the farmhouses at midnight, with whoop and halloo, like a troop of Don Cossacks; and the old dames, startled out of their sleep, would listen for a moment till the hurry-scurry had clattered by, and then exclaim, "Ay, there goes Brom Bones and his gang!" The neighbours looked upon him with a mixture of awe, admiration, and good-will; and, when any madcap prank or rustic brawl occurred in the vicinity, always shook their heads, and warranted Brom Bones was at the bottom of it.

This rantipole hero had for some time singled out the blooming Katrina for the object of his uncouth gallantries, and though his amorous toyings were somethng like the gentle caresses and endearments of a bear, yet it was whispered that she did not altogether discourage his hopes. Certain it is, his advances were signals for rival candidates to retire, who felt no inclination to cross a lion in his amours; insomuch, that when his horse was seen tied to Van Tassel's paling, on a Sunday night, a sure sign that his master was courting, or, as it is termed, "sparking," within, all other suitors passed by in despair, and carried the war into other quarters.

Such was the formidable rival with whom Ichabod Crane had to contend, and, considering all things, a stouter man than he would have shrunk from the competition, and a wiser man would have despaired. He had, however, a happy mixture of pliability and perseverance in his nature; he was in form and spirit like a supple-jack—yielding, but tough; though he bent, he never broke; and though he bowed beneath the slightest pressure, yet, the moment it was away—jerk!—he was as erect, and carried his head as high as ever.

To have taken the field openly against his rival would have been madness; for he was not a man to be thwarted in his amours, any more than that stormy lover, Achilles. Ichabod, therefore, made his advances in a quiet and gently insinuating manner. Under cover of his character of singing-master, he made frequent visits at the farmhouse; not that he had anything to apprehend from the meddlesome interference of parents, which is so often a stumbling block in the path of lovers. Balt Van Tassel was an easy, indulgent soul; he loved his daughter better even than his pipe, and, like a reasonable man and an excellent father, let her have her way in everything. His notable little wife, too, had enough to do to attend to her housekeeping and manage her poultry; for, as she sagely observed, ducks and geese are foolish things, and must be looked after, but girls can take care of themselves. Thus, while the busy dame bustled about the house, or plied her spinning-wheel at one end of the piazza, honest Balt would sit smoking his evening pipe at the other, watching the achievements of a little wooden warrior, who, armed with a sword in each hand, was most valiantly fighting the wind on the pinnacle of the barn. In the meantime, Ichabod would carry on his suit with the daughter by the

side of the spring under the great elm, or sauntering along in the twilight, that hour so favourable to the lover's eloquence.

I profess not to know how women's hearts are wooed and won. To me they have always been matters of riddle and admiration. Some seem to have but one vulnerable point, or door of access; while others have a thousand avenues, and may be captured in a thousand different ways. It is a great triumph of skill to gain the former, but a still greater proof of generalship to maintain possession of the latter, for a man must battle for his fortress at every door and window. He who wins a thousand common hearts is therefore entitled to some renown; but he who keeps undisputed sway over the heart of a coquette is indeed a hero. Certain it is, this was not the case with the redoubtable Brom Bones; and from the moment Ichabod Crane made his advances, the interests of the former evidently declined: his horse was no longer seen tied to the palings on Sunday nights, and a deadly feud gradually arose between him and the preceptor of Sleepy Hollow.

Brom, who had a degree of rough chivalry in his nature, would fain have carried matters to open warfare and have settled their pretensions to the lady, according to the mode of those most concise and simple reasoners, the knights-errant of yore—by single combat; but Ichabod was too conscious of the superior might of his adversary to enter the lists against him; he had overheard a boast of Bones, that he would "double the schoolmaster up, and lay him on a shelf of his own schoolhouse"; and he was too wary to give him an opportunity. There was something extremely provoking in this obstinately pacific system; it left Brom no alternative but to draw upon the

funds of rustic waggery in his disposition, and to play off boorish practical jokes upon his rival. Ichabod became the object of whimsical persecution to Bones and his gang of rough riders. They harried his hitherto peaceful domains, smoked out his singing-school by stopping up the chimney, broke into the schoolhouse at night, in spite of its formidable fastenings of withe and window stakes, and turned everything topsy-turvy, so that the poor schoolmaster began to think all the witches in the country held their meetings there. But what was still more annoying, Brom took all opportunities of turning him into ridicule in presence of his mistress, and had a scoundrel dog whom he taught to whine in the most ludicrous manner, and introduced as a rival of Ichabod's, to instruct her in psalmody.

In this way matters went on for some time, without producing any material effect on the relative situations of the contending powers. On a fine autumnal afternoon, Ichabod, in pensive mood, sat enthroned on the lofty stool from whence he usually watched all the concerns of his little literary realm. In his hand he swayed a ferule, that sceptre of despotic power; the birch of justice reposed on three nails behind the throne, a constant terror to evil doers; while on the desk before him might be seen sundry contraband articles and prohibited weapons detected upon the persons of idle urchins, such as half-munched apples, popguns, whirligigs, fly-cages, and whole legions of rampant little paper game-cocks. Apparently there had been some appalling act of justice recently inflicted, for his scholars were all busily intent upon their books, or slyly whispering behind them with one eye kept upon the master; and a kind of buzzing stillness reigned throughout the schoolroom. It was

suddenly interrupted by the appearance of a negro in tow-cloth jacket and trousers, a round-crowned fragment of a hat, like the cap of Mercury, and mounted on the back of a ragged, wild, half-broken colt, which he managed with a rope by way of halter. He came clattering up to the school door with an invitation to Ichabod to attend a merry-making or "quilting-frolic," to be held that evening at Mynheer Van Tassel's; and having delivered his message with that air of importance and effort at fine language which a negro is apt to display on petty embassies of the kind, he dashed over the brook, and was seen scampering away up the Hollow, full of the importance and hurry of his mission.

All was now bustle and hubbub in the late quiet schoolroom. The scholars were hurried through their lessons without stopping at trifles; those who were nimble skipped over half with impunity, and those who were tardy had a smart application now and then in the rear, to quicken their speed or help them over a tall word. Books were flung aside without being put away on the shelves, inkstands were overturned, benches thrown down, and the whole school was turned loose an hour before the usual time, bursting forth like a legion of young imps, yelping and racketing about the green in joy at their early emancipation.

The gallant Ichabod now spent at least an extra half hour at his toilet, brushing and furbishing up his best, and indeed only suit of rusty black, and arranging his locks by a bit of broken looking-glass that hung up in the schoolhouse. That he might make his appearance before his mistress in the true style of a cavalier, he borrowed a horse from the farmer with whom he was domiciliated, a choleric old Dutchman of the name of Hans Van Rip-

per, and, thus gallantly mounted, issued forth like a knight-errant in quest of adventures. But it is meet I should, in the true spirit of romantic story, give some account of the looks and equipments of my hero and his steed. The animal he bestrode was a broken down plow-horse, that had outlived almost everything but its viciousness. He was gaunt and shagged, with a ewe neck, and a head like a hammer; his rusty mane and tail were tangled and knotted with burs; one eye had lost its pupil, and was glaring and spectral, but the other had the gleam of a genuine devil in it. Still he must have had fire and mettle in his day, if we may judge from the name he bore of Gunpowder. He had, in fact, been a favourite steed of his master's, the choleric Van Ripper, who was a furious rider, and had infused, very probably, some of his own spirit into the animal; for, old and broken down as he looked, there was more of the lurking devil in him than in any young filly in the country.

Ichabod was a suitable figure for such a steed. He rode with short stirrups, which brought his knees nearly up to the pommel of the saddle; his sharp elbows stuck out like grasshoppers'; he carried his whip perpendicularly in his hand, like a sceptre, and as his horse jogged on, the motion of his arms was not unlike the flapping of a pair of wings. A small wool hat rested on the top of his nose, for so his scanty strip of forehead might be called, and the skirts of his black coat fluttered out almost to the horse's tail. Such was the appearance of Ichabod and his steed as they shambled out of the gate of Hans Van Ripper, and it was altogether such an apparition as is seldom to be met with in broad daylight.

It was, as I have said, a fine autumnal day; the sky

was clear and serene, and nature wore that rich and golden livery which we always associate with the idea of abundance. The forests had put on their sober brown and yellow, while some trees of the tenderer kind had been nipped by the frosts into brilliant dyes of orange, purple, and scarlet. Streaming files of wild ducks began to make their appearance high in the air; the bark of the squirrel might be heard from the groves of beech and hickory nuts, and the pensive whistle of the quail at intervals from the neighbouring stubble field.

The small birds were taking their farewell banquets. In the fullness of their revelry, they fluttered, chirping and frolicking from bush to bush, and tree to tree, capricious from the very profusion and variety around them. There was the honest cockrobin, the favourite game of stripling sportsmen, with its loud querulous note; and the twittering blackbirds flying in sable clouds; and the golden-winged woodpecker, with his crimson crest, his broad black gorget, and splendid plumage; and the cedar-bird, with its red-tipt wings and yellow-tipt tail and its little monteiro cap of feathers; and the blue jay, that noisy coxcomb, in his gay light blue coat and white underclothes, screaming and chattering, nodding and bobbing and bowing, and pretending to be on good terms with every songster of the grove.

As Ichabod jogged slowly on his way, his eye, ever open to every symptom of culinary abundance, ranged with delight over the treasures of jolly autumn. On all sides he beheld vast store of apples: some hanging in oppressive opulence on the trees; some gathered into baskets and barrels for the market; others heaped up in rich piles for the cider-press. Farther on he beheld great fields of Indian corn, with its golden ears peeping

from their leafy coverts, and holding out the promise of cakes and hasty-pudding; and the yellow pumpkins lying beneath them, turning up their fair round bellies to the sun, and giving ample prospects of the most luxurious of pies; and anon he passed the fragrant buckwheat fields breathing the odour of the beehive, and as he beheld them, soft anticipations stole over his mind of dainty slap-jacks, well buttered, and garnished with honey or treacle, by the delicate little dimpled hand of Katrina Van Tassel.

Thus feeding his mind with many sweet thoughts and "sugared suppositions," he journeyed along the sides of a range of hills which look out upon some of the goodliest scenes of the mighty Hudson. The sun gradually wheeled his broad disk down in the west. The wide bosom of the Tappen Zee lay motionless and glassy, excepting that here and there a gentle undulation waved and prolonged the blue shadow of the distant mountain. A few amber clouds floated in the sky, without a breath of air to move them. The horizon was of a fine golden tint, changing gradually into a pure apple green, and from that into the deep blue of the mid-heaven. A slanting ray lingered on the woody crests of the precipices that overhung some parts of the river, giving greater depth to the dark gray and purple of the rocky sides. A sloop was loitering in the distance, dropping slowly down with the tide, her sail hanging uselessly against the mast; and as the reflection of the sky gleamed along the still water, it seemed as if the vessel was suspended in the air.

It was toward evening that Ichabod arrived at the castle of the Heer Van Tassel, which he found thronged with the pride and flower of the adjacent country. Old farmers, a spare leathern-faced race, in homespun coats

and breeches, blue stockings, huge shoes, and magnificent pewter buckles. Their brisk, withered little dames, in close crimped caps, long waisted short-gowns, homespun petticoats, with scissors and pincushions, and gay calico pockets hanging on the outside. Buxom lasses, almost as antiquated as their mothers, excepting where a straw hat, a fine ribbon, or perhaps a white frock, gave symptoms of city innovation. The sons, in short square skirted coats, with rows of stupendous brass buttons, and their hair generally queued in the fashion of the times, especially if they could procure an eelskin for the purpose, it being esteemed throughout the country as a potent nourisher and strengthener of the hair.

Brom Bones, however, was the hero of the scene, having come to the gathering on his favourite steed Daredevil, a creature, like himself, full of mettle and mischief, and which no one but himself could manage. He was, in fact, noted for preferring vicious animals, given to all kinds of tricks which kept the rider in constant risk of his neck, for he held a tractable, well broken horse as unworthy of a lad of spirit.

Fain would I pause to dwell upon the world of charms that burst upon the enraptured gaze of my hero, as he entered the state parlour of Van Tassel's mansion. Not those of the bevy of buxom lasses, with their luxurious display of red and white; but the ample charms of a genuine Dutch country tea-table, in the sumptuous time of autumn. Such heaped-up platters of cakes of various and almost indescribable kinds, known only to experienced Dutch housewives! There was the doughty doughnut, the tender olykoek, and the crisp and crumbling cruller; sweet cakes and short cakes, ginger cakes and honey cakes, and the whole family of cakes. And

then there were apple pies, and peach pies, and pumpkin pies; besides slices of ham and smoked beef: and moreover delectable dishes of preserved plums, and peaches, and pears, and quinces; not to mention broiled shad and roasted chickens; together with bowls of milk and cream, all mingled higgledy-piggledy, pretty much as I have enumerated them, with the motherly teapot sending up its clouds of vapour from the midst—Heaven bless the mark! I want breath and time to discuss this banquet as it deserves, and am too eager to get on with my story. Happily, Ichabod Crane was not in so great a hurry as his historian, but did ample justice to every dainty.

He was a kind and thankful creature, whose heart dilated in proportion as his skin was filled with good cheer, and whose spirits rose with eating, as some men's do with drink. He could not help, too, rolling his large eyes round him as he ate, and chuckling with the possibility that he might one day be lord of all this scene of almost unimaginable luxury and splendour. Then he, thought, how soon he'd turn his back upon the old schoolhouse; snap his fingers in the face of Hans Van Ripper, and every other niggardly patron, and kick any itinerant pedagogue out of doors that should dare to call him comrade!

Old Baltus Van Tassel moved about among his guests with a face dilated with content and good humour, round and jolly as the harvest moon. His hospitable attentions were brief, but expressive, being confined to a shake of the hand, a slap on the shoulder, a loud laugh and a pressing invitation to "fall to, and help themselves."

And now the sound of the music from the common room, or hall, summoned to the dance. The musician was an old gray-headed negro, who had been the itin-

erant orchestra of the neighbourhood for more than half a century. His instrument was as old and battered as himself. The greater part of the time he scraped on two or three strings, acompanying every movement of the bow with a motion of the head; bowing almost to the ground, and stamping with his foot whenever a fresh couple were to start.

Ichabod prided himself upon his dancing as much as upon his vocal powers. Not a limb, not a fibre about him was idle; and to have seen his loosely hung frame in full motion, and clattering about the room, you would have thought St. Vitus himself, that blessed patron of the dance, was figuring before you in person. He was the admiration of all the negroes; who, having gathered, of all ages and sizes, from the farm and the neighbourhood, stood forming a pyramid of shining black faces at every door and window; gazing with delight at the scene; rolling their white eye-balls, and showing grinning rows of ivory from ear to ear. How could the flogger of urchins be otherwise than animated and joyous? the lady of his heart was his partner in the dance, and smiling graciously in reply to all his amorous oglings; while Brom Bones, sorely smitten with love and jealousy, sat brooding by himself in one corner.

When the dance was at an end, Ichabod was attracted to a knot of the sager folks, who, with Old Van Tassel, sat smoking at one end of the piazza, gossiping over former times, and drawing out long stories about the war.

This neighbourhood, at the time of which I am speaking, was one of those highly favoured places which abound with chronicle and great men. The British and American line had run near it during the war; it had, therefore, been the scene of marauding, and infested with refugees,

cow-boys, and all kinds of border chivalry. Just sufficient time had elapsed to enable each story-teller to dress up his tale with a little becoming fiction, and, in the indistinctness of his recollection, to make himself the hero of every exploit.

There was the story of Doffue Martling, a large blue-bearded Dutchman, who had nearly taken a British frigate with an old iron nine-pounder from a mud breastwork, only that his gun burst at the sixth discharge. And there was an old gentleman who shall be nameless, being too rich a mynheer to be lightly mentioned, who, in the battle of White Plains, being an excellent master of defence, parried a musket-ball with a small-sword, insomuch that he absolutely felt it whiz round the blade, and glance off at the hilt; in proof of which he was ready at any time to show the sword, with the hilt a little bent. There were several more that had been equally great in the field, not one of whom but was persuaded that he had a considerable hand in bringing the war to a happy termination.

But all these were nothing to the tales of ghosts and apparitions that succeeded. The neighbourhood is rich in legendary treasures of the kind. Local tales and superstitions thrive best in these sheltered, long-settled retreats; but are trampled under foot by the shifting throng that forms the population of most of our country places. Besides, there is no encouragement for ghosts in most of our villages, for they have scarcely had time to finish their first nap and turn themselves in their graves, before their surviving friends have travelled away from the neighbourhood; so that when they turn out at night to walk their rounds, they have no acquaintance left to call upon. This is perhaps the reason why we so seldom

hear of ghosts except in our long established Dutch communities.

The immediate cause, however, of the prevalence of supernatural stories in these parts, was doubtless owing to the vicinity of Sleepy Hollow. There was a contagion in the very air that blew from that haunted region; it breathed forth an atmosphere of dreams and fancies infecting all the land. Several of the Sleepy Hollow people were present at Van Tassel's, and, as usual, were doling out their wild and wonderful legends. Many dismal tales were told about funeral trains, and mourning cries and wailings heard and seen about the great tree where the unfortunate Major André was taken, and which stood in the neighbourhood. Some mention was made also of the woman in white, that haunted the dark glen at Raven Rock, and was often heard to shriek on winter nights before a storm, having perished there in the snow. The chief part of the stories, however, turned upon the favourite spectre of Sleepy Hollow, the Headless Horseman, who had been heard several times of late, patrolling the country; and, it was said, tethered his horse nightly among the graves in the churchyard.

The sequestered situation of the church seems always to have made it a favourite haunt of troubled spirits. It stands on a knoll, surrounded by locust trees and lofty elms from among which its decent, whitewashed walls shine modestly forth, like Christian purity beaming through the shades of retirement. A gentle slope descends from it to a silver sheet of water, bordered by high trees, between which, peeps may be caught at the blue hills of the Hudson. To look upon its grass-grown yard, where the sunbeams seem to sleep so quietly, one would think that there at least the dead might rest in peace. On one

side of the church extends a wide woody dell, along which raves a large brook among broken rocks and trunks of fallen trees. Over a deep black part of the stream, not far from the church, was formerly thrown a wooden bridge; the road that led to it, and the bridge itself, were thickly shaded by overhanging trees, which cast a gloom about it, even in the daytime; but occasioned a fearful darkness at night. Such was one of the favourite haunts of the Headless Horseman, and the place where he was most frequently encountered. The tale was told of old Brouwer, a most heretical disbeliever in ghosts, how he met the Horseman returning from his foray into Sleepy Hollow, and was obliged to get up behind him; how they galloped over bush and brake, over hill and swamp, until they reached the bridge; when the Horseman suddenly turned into a skeleton, threw old Brouwer into the brook, and sprang away over the tree-tops with a clap of thunder.

This story was immediately matched by a thrice marvellous adventure of Brom Bones, who made light of the Galloping Hessian as an arrant jockey. He affirmed that on returning one night from the neighbouring village of Sing Sing, he had been overtaken by this midnight trooper; that the had offered to race with him for a bowl of punch, and should have won it too, for Daredevil beat the goblin horse all hollow, but just as they came to the church bridge, the Hessian bolted, and vanished in a flash of fire.

All these tales, told in that drowsy undertone with which men talk in the dark, the countenances of the listeners only now and then receiving a casual gleam from the glare of a pipe, sank deep in the mind of Ichabod. He repaid them in kind with large extracts from his invaluable

author, Cotton Mather, and added many marvellous events that had taken place in his native state of Connecticut, and fearful sights which he had seen in his nightly walks about Sleepy Hollow.

The revel now gradually broke up. The old farmers gathered together their families in their wagons, and were heard for some time rattling along the hollow roads, and over the distant hills. Some of the damsels mounted on pillions behind their favourite swains, and their light-hearted laughter, mingling with the clatter of hoofs, echoed along the silent woodlands, sounding fainter and fainter, until they gradually died away—and the late scene of noise and frolic was all silent and deserted. Ichabod only lingered behind, according to the custom of country lovers, to have a tête-*a*-tête with the heiress; fully convinced that he was now on the high road to success. What passed at this interview I will not pretend to say, for in fact I do not know. Something, however, I fear me, must have gone wrong, for he certainly sallied forth, after no very great interval, with an air quite desolate and chapfallen. Oh, these women! these women! Could that girl have been playing off any of her coquettish tricks? Was her encouragement of the poor pedagogue all a mere sham to secure her conquest of his rival? Heaven only knows, not I! Let it suffice to say, Ichabod stole forth with the air of one who had been sacking a henroost, rather than a fair lady's heart. Without looking to the right or left to notice the scene of rural wealth, on which he had so often gloated, he went straight to the stable, and with several hearty cuffs and kicks roused his steed most uncourteously from the comfortable quarters in which he was soundly sleeping, dreaming of moun-

tains of corn and oats, and whole valleys of timothy and clover.

It was the very witching time of night that Ichabod, heavy-hearted and crest-fallen, pursued his travels homewards, along the sides of the lofty hills which rise above Tarry Town, and which he had traversed so cheerily in the afternoon. The hour was as dismal as himself. Far below him the Tappen Zee spread its dusky and indistinct waste of waters, with here and there the tall mast of a sloop, riding quietly at anchor under the land. In the dead hush of midnight, he could even hear the barking of the watchdog from the opposite shore of the Hudson; but it was so vague and faint as only to give an idea of his distance from this faithful companion of man. Now and then, too, the long-drawn crowing of a cock, accidentally awakened, would sound far, far off, from some farmhouse away among the hills—but it was like a dreaming sound in his ear. No signs of life occurred near him, but occasionally the melancholy chirp of a cricket, or perhaps the guttural twang of a bull-frog from a neighbouring marsh, as if sleeping uncomfortably and turning suddenly in his bed.

All the stories of ghosts and goblins that he had heard in the afternoon now came crowding upon his recollection. The night grew darker and darker; the stars seemed to sink deeper in the sky, and driving clouds occasionally hid them from his sight. He had never felt so lonely and dismal. He was, moreover, approaching the very place where many of the scenes of the ghost stories had been laid. In the centre of the road stood an enormous tulip-tree, which towered like a giant above all the other trees of the neighbourhood, and formed a kind of landmark. Its limbs were gnarled and fantastic,

large enough to form trunks for ordinary trees, twisting down almost to the earth, and rising again into the air. It was connected with the tragical story of the unfortunate André, who had been taken prisoner hard by, and was universally known by the name of Major André's tree. The common people regarded it with a mixture of respect and superstition, partly out of sympathy for the fate of its ill-starred namesake, and partly from the tales of strange sights, and doleful lamentations, told concerning it.

As Ichabod approached this fearful tree, he began to whistle; he thought his whistle was answered; it was but a blast sweeping sharply through the dry branches. As he approached a little nearer, he thought he saw something white, hanging in the midst of the tree: he paused, and ceased whistling; but, on looking more narrowly, perceived that it was a place where the tree had been scathed by lightning, and the white wood laid bare. Suddenly he heard a groan—his teeth chattered, and his knees smote against the saddle: it was but the rubbing of one huge bough upon another, as they were swayed about by the breeze. He passed the tree in safety, but new perils lay before him.

About two hundred yards from the tree, a small brook crossed the road, and ran into a marshy and thickly-wooded glen, known by the name of Wiley's Swamp. A few rough logs, laid side by side, served for a bridge over this stream. On that side of the road where the brook entered the wood, a group of oaks and chestnuts, matted thick with wild grape-vines, threw a cavernous gloom over it. To pass this bridge was the severest trial. It was at this identical spot that the unfortunate André was captured, and under the covert of those chestnuts and vines were the sturdy yeomen concealed who sur-

prised him. This has ever since been considered a haunted stream, and fearful are the feelings of the schoolboy who has to pass it alone after dark.

As he approached the stream, his heart began to thump; he summoned up, however, all his resolution, gave his horse half a score of kicks in the ribs, and attempted to dash briskly across the bridge; but instead of starting forward, the perverse old animal made a lateral movement, and ran broadside against the fence. Ichabod, whose fears increased with the delay, jerked the reins on the other side, and kicked lustily with the contrary foot: it was all in vain; his steed started, it is true, but it was only to plunge to the opposite side of the road into a thicket of brambles and alder-bushes. The schoolmaster now bestowed both whip and heel upon the starveling ribs of old Gunpowder, who dashed forward, snuffling and snorting, but came to a stand just by the bridge, with a suddenness that had nearly sent his rider sprawling over his head. Just at this moment a plashy tramp by the side of the bridge caught the sensitive ear of Ichabod. In the dark shadow of the grove, on the margin of the brook, he beheld something huge, misshapen, and towering. It stirred not, but seemed gathered up in the gloom, like some gigantic monster ready to spring upon the traveller.

The hair of the affrighted pedagogue rose upon his head with terror. What was to be done? To turn and fly was now too late; and besides, what chance was there of escaping ghost or goblin, if such it was, which could ride upon the wings of the wind? Summoning up, therefore, a show of courage, he demanded in stammering accents, "Who are you?" He received no reply. He repeated his demand in a still more agitated

voice. Still there was no answer. Once more he cudgelled the sides of the inflexible Gunpowder, and, shutting his eyes, broke forth with involuntary fervour into a psalm tune. Just then the shadowy object of alarm put itself in motion, and with a scramble and a bound stood at once in the middle of the road. Though the night was dark and dismal, yet the form of the unknown might now in some degree be ascertained. He appeared to be a horseman of large dimensions, and mounted on a black horse of powerful frame. He made no offer of molestation or sociability, but kept aloof on one side of the road, jogging along on the blind side of old Gunpowder, who had now got over his fright and waywardness.

Ichabod, who had no relish for this strange midnight companion, and bethought himself of the adventure of Brom Bones with the Galloping Hessian, now quickened his steed in hopes of leaving him behind. The stranger, however, quickened his horse to an equal pace. Ichabod pulled up, and fell into a walk, thinking to lag behind—the other did the same. His heart began to sink within him; he endeavoured to resume his psalm tune, but his parched tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and he could not utter a stave. There was something in the moody and dogged silence of this pertinacious companion that was mysterious and appalling. It was soon fearfully accounted for. On mounting a rising ground, which brought the figure of his fellow-traveller in relief against the sky, gigantic in height, and muffled in a cloak, Ichabod was horror-struck on perceiving that he was headless! but his horror was still more increased on observing that the head, which should have rested on his shoulders, was carried before him on the pommel of his saddle! His terror rose to desperation; he rained

a shower of kicks and blows upon Gunpowder, hoping by a sudden movement to give his companion the slip; but the spectre started full jump with him. Away, then, they dashed through thick and thin; stones flying and sparks flashing at every bound. Ichabod's flimsy garments fluttered in the air, as he stretched his long lank body away over his horse's head, in the eagerness of his flight.

They had now reached the road which turns off to Sleepy Hollow; but Gunpowder, who seemed possessed with a demon, instead of keeping up it, made an opposite turn, and plunged headlong down hill to the left. This road leads through a sandy hollow, shaded by trees for about a quarter of a mile, where it crosses the bridge famous in goblin story; and just beyond swells the green knoll on which stands the whitewashed church.

As yet the panic of the steed had given his unskilful rider an apparent advantage in the chase; but just as he had got half way through the hollow, the girths of the saddle gave way, and he felt it slipping from under him. He seized it by the pommel, and endeavoured to hold it firm, but in vain; and had just time to save himself by clasping old Gunpowder round the neck, when the saddle fell to the earth, and he heard it trampled under foot by his pursuer. For a moment the terror of Hans Van Ripper's wrath passed across his mind—for it was his Sunday saddle; but this was no time for petty fears; the goblin was hard on his haunches; and (unskilful rider that he was!) he had much ado to maintain his seat; sometimes slipping on one side, sometimes on another, and sometimes jolted on the high ridge of his horse's backbone, with a violence that he verily feared would cleave him asunder.

An opening in the trees now cheered him with the hopes that the church bridge was at hand. The wavering reflection of a silver star in the bosom of the brook told him that he was not mistaken. He saw the walls of the church dimly glaring under the trees beyond. He recollected the place where Brom Bones's ghostly competitor had disappeared. "If I can but reach that bridge," thought Ichabod, "I am safe." Just then he heard the black steed panting and blowing close behind him; he even fancied that he felt his hot breath. Another convulsive kick in the ribs, and old Gunpowder sprang upon the bridge; he thundered over the resounding planks; he gained the opposite side; and now Ichabod cast a look behind to see if his pursuer should vanish, according to rule, in a flash of fire and brimstone. Just then he saw the goblin rising in his stirrups, and in the very act of hurling his head at him. Ichabod endeavoured to dodge the horrible missile, but too late. It encountered his cranium with a tremendous crash— he was tumbled headlong into the dust, and Gunpowder, the black steed, and the goblin rider, passed by like a whirlwind.

The next morning the old horse was found without his saddle, and with the bridle under his feet, soberly cropping the grass at his master's gate. Ichabod did not make his appearance at breakfast; dinner-hour came, but no Ichabod. The boys assembled at the schoolhouse, and strolled idly about the banks of the brook; but no schoolmaster. Hans Van Ripper now began to feel some uneasiness about the fate of poor Ichabod, and his saddle. An inquiry was set on foot, and after diligent investigation they came upon his traces. In one part of the road leading to the church was found the saddle trampled in the dirt; the tracks of horses'

hoofs deeply dented in the road, and evidently at furious speed, were traced to the bridge, beyond which, on the bank of a broad part of the brook, where the water ran deep and black, was found the hat of the unfortunate Ichabod, and close beside it a shattered pumpkin.

The brook was searched, but the body of the schoolmaster was not to be discovered. Hans Van Ripper, as executor of his estate, examined the bundle which contained all his worldly effects. They consisted of two shirts and a half; two stocks for the neck; a pair or two of worsted stockings; an old pair of corduroy small-clothes; a rusty razor; a book of psalm tunes full of dog's-ears; and a broken pitch-pipe. As to the books and furniture of the shoolhouse, they belonged to the community, excepting Cotton Mather's History of Witchcraft, a New England Almanac, and a book of dreams and fortune-telling; in which last was a sheet of foolscap much scribbled and blotted in several fruitless attempts to make a copy of verses in honour of the heiress of Van Tassel. These magic books and the poetic scrawl were forthwith consigned to the flames by Hans Van Ripper; who, from that time forward, determined to send his children no more to school; observing that he never knew any good come of this same reading and writing. Whatever money the schoolmaster possessed, and he had received his quarter's pay but a day or two before, he must have had about his person at the time of his disappearance.

The mysterious event caused much speculation at the church on the following Sunday. Knots of gazers and gossips were collected in the churchyard, at the bridge, and at the spot where the hat and pumpkin had been found. The stories of Brouwer, of Bones, and a whole

budget of others were called to mind; and when they had diligently considered them all, and compared them with the symptoms of the present case, they shook their heads, and came to the conclusion that Ichabod had been carried off by the Galloping Hessian. As he was a bachelor, and in nobody's debt, nobody troubled his head any more about him; the school was removed to a different quarter of the Hollow, and another pedagogue reigned in his stead.

It is true, an old farmer, who had been down to New York on a visit several years after, and from whom this account of the ghostly adventure was received, brought home the intelligence that Ichabod Crane was still alive; that he had left the neighbourhood partly through fear of the goblin and Hans Van Ripper, and partly in mortification at having been suddenly dismissed by the heiress; that he had changed his quarters to a distant part of the country; had kept school and studied law at the same time; had been admitted to the bar; turned politician; electioneered; written for the newspapers; and finally had been made a justice of the ten pound court. Brom Bones, too, who, shortly after his rival's disappearance conducted the blooming Katrina in triumph to the altar, was observed to look exceedingly knowing whenever the story of Ichabod was related, and always burst into a hearty laugh at the mention of the pumpkin; which led some to suspect that he knew more about the matter than he chose to tell.

The old country wives, however, who are the best judges of these matters, maintain to this day that Ichabod was spirited away by supernatural means; and it is a favourite story often told about the neighbourhood round the winter evening fire. The bridge became more

than ever an object of superstitious awe; and that may be the reason why the road has been altered of late years, so as to approach the church by the border of the mill-pond. The schoolhouse being deserted soon fell to decay, and was reported to be haunted by the ghost of the unfortunate pedagogue; and the plough-boy, loitering homeward of a still summer evening, has often fancied his voice at a distance, chanting a melancholy psalm tune among the tranquil solitudes of Sleepy Hollow.